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MEAN MACHINES SEGA

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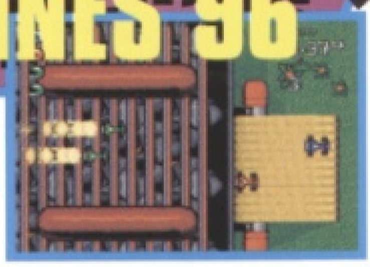


EXCLUSIVE! EARTHWORM JIM 2

WORM-DERFUL PREVIEW

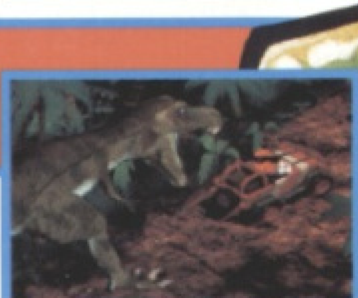
MICRO MACHINES '96

MAKING TRACKS...



COOL SPOT II

SPOT GOES TO SATURN



MEGADRIVE



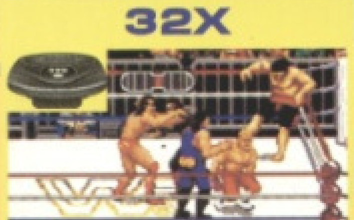
LIGHT CRUSADER

SATURN



FIFA '96

32X



WWF RAW

MEGA-CD



FATAL FURY

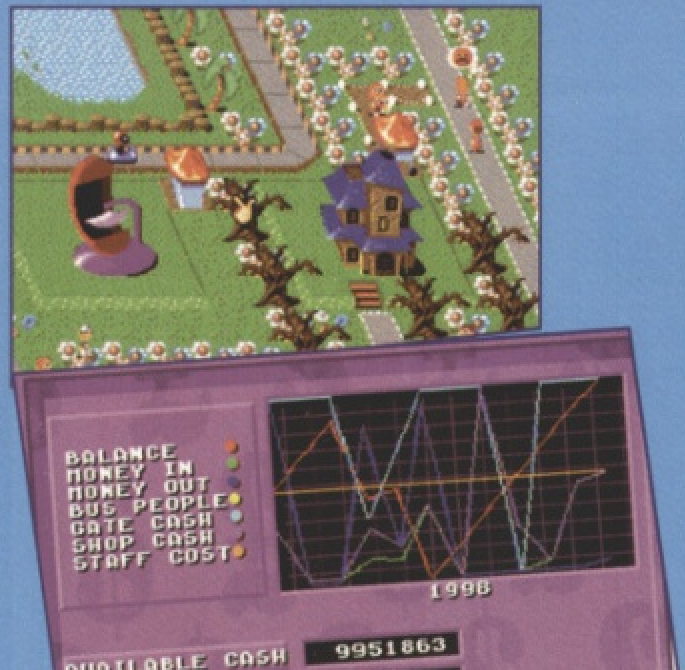
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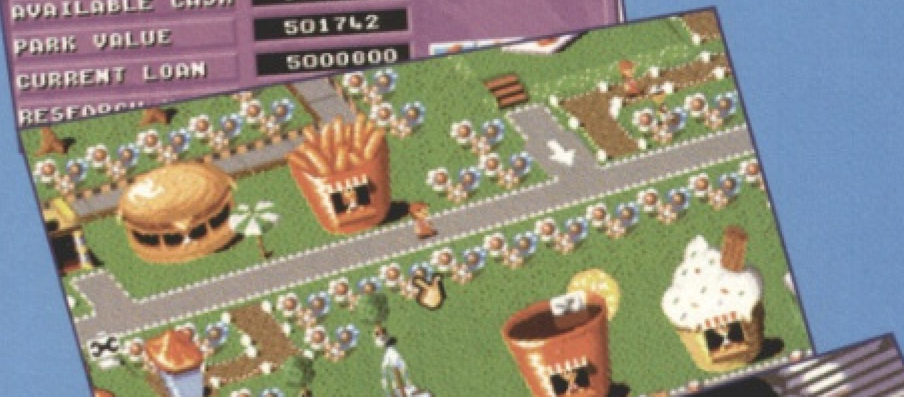


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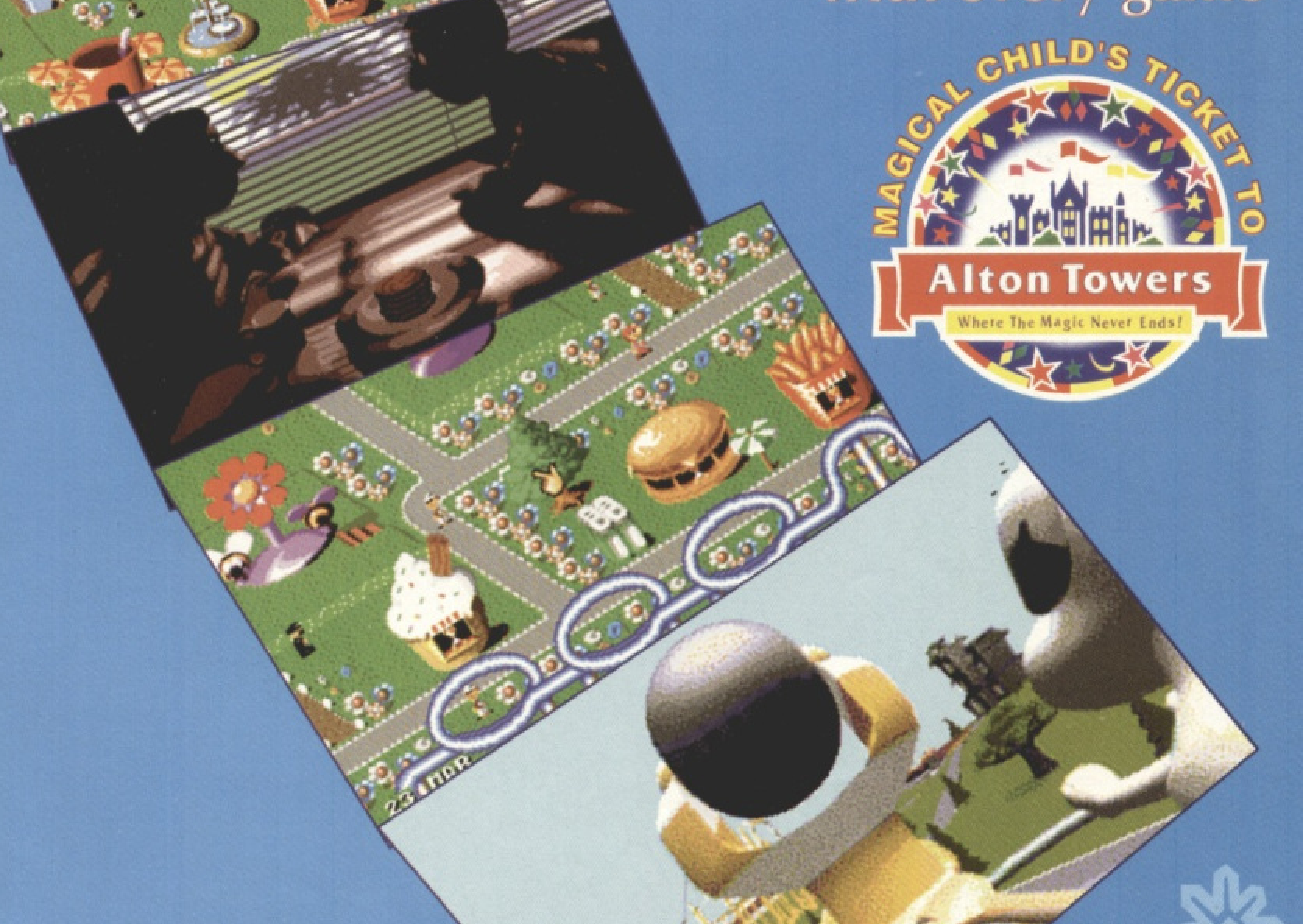
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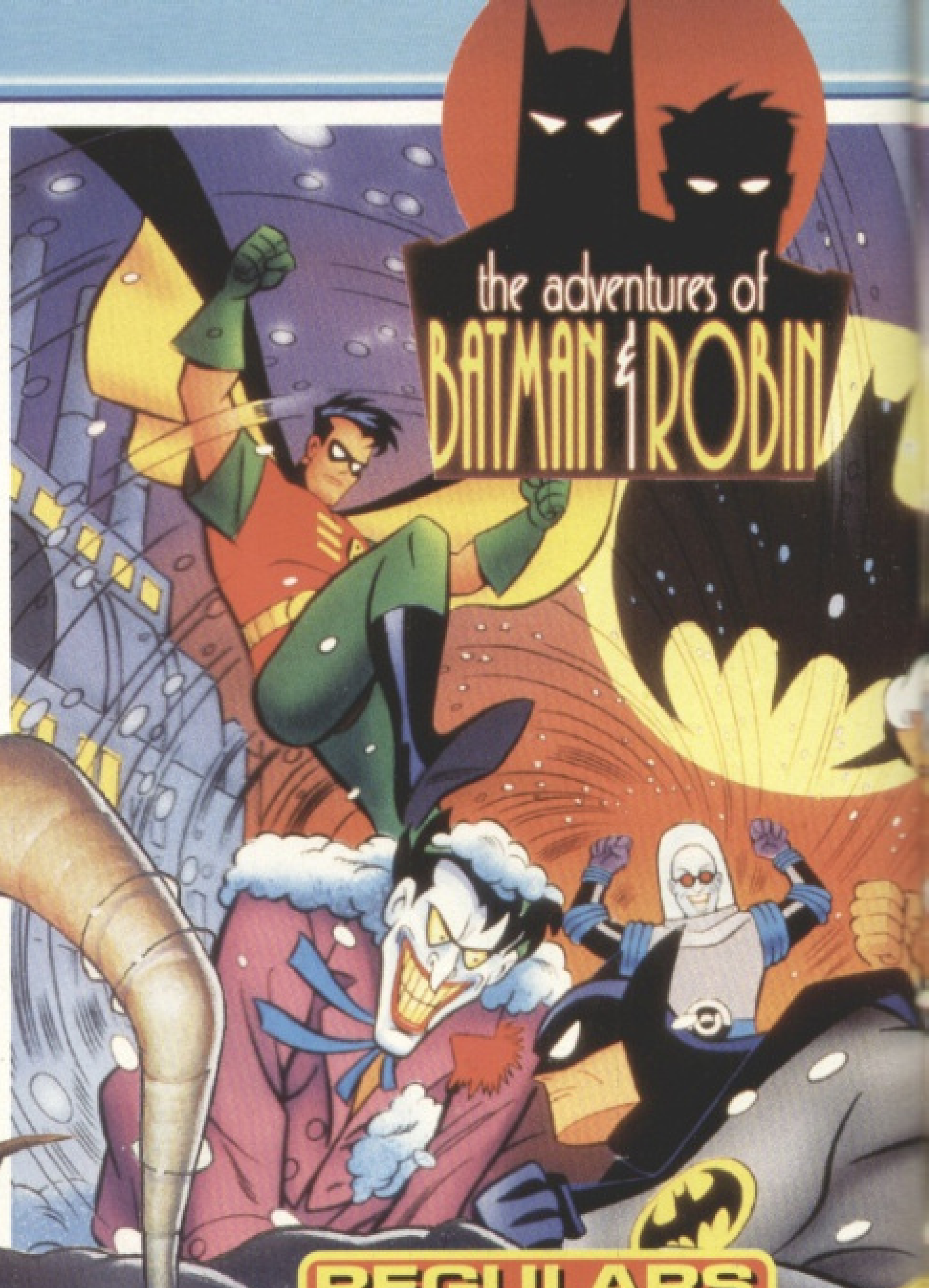
For more information about Theme Park Sega Mega Drive, please telphone 01753 546 465, email uk-support@ea.com, or write to Electronic Arts, P.O. Box 835, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8XU.

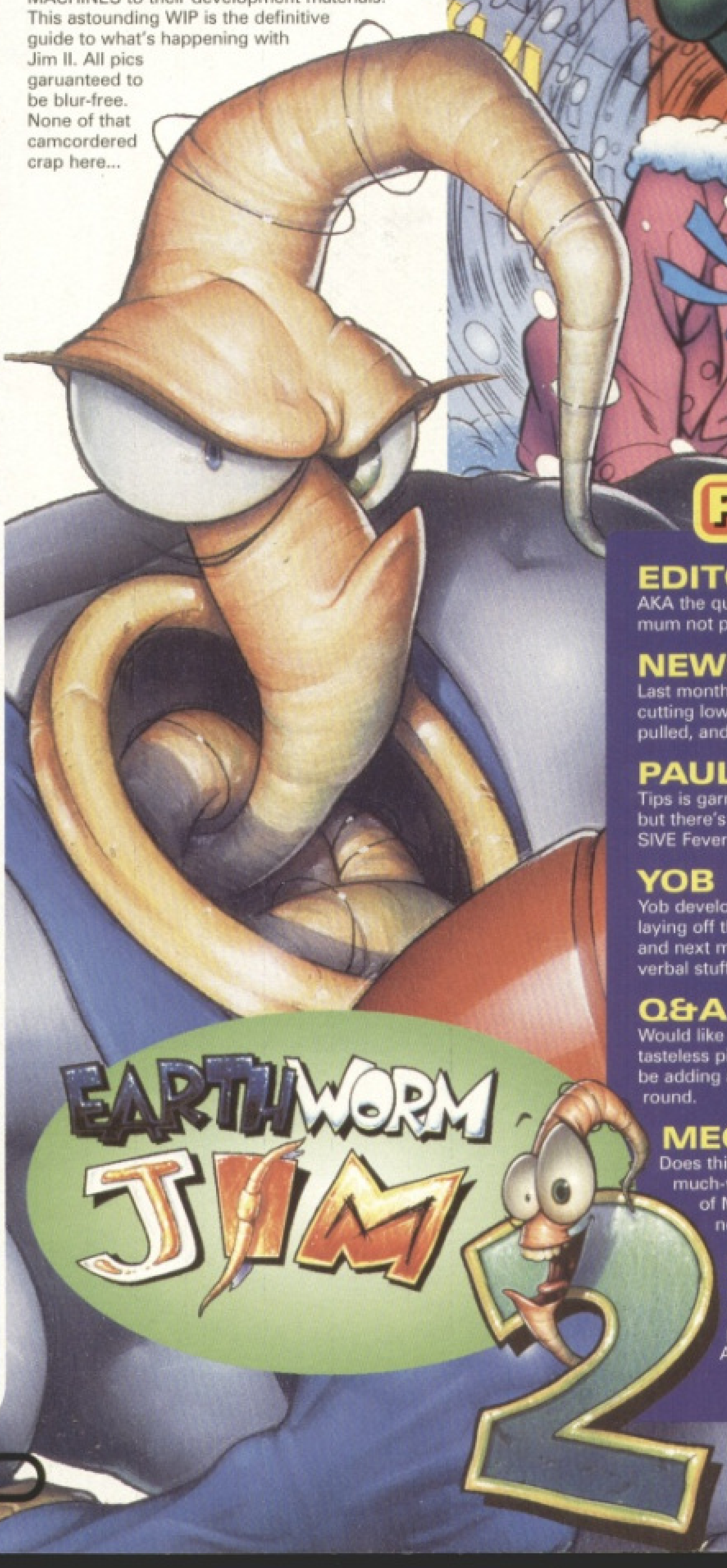
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COVER STORY

MEAN MACHINES EXCLUSIVE

EARTHWORM JIM II





REGULARS





EDITORIAL

Welcome to this, the second issue of the new look Mean Machines. Once again, we have the best possible mix of Saturn, Megadrive and assorted Sega-related news, previews and reviews, along with tips galore. The reason we can do this is that we are commited to keeping our mag at at least 100 pages throughout the summer — unlike our puny rivals who are faltering at the 84 and 92-page mark. The main beneficiary of this is you, who can expect more coverage as we have more space than anyone else. Just one of many reasons why MMS is still the undisputed kind of Sega mags. 'til next month. Steve.

CASH FOR PHOTOS THE RETURN!

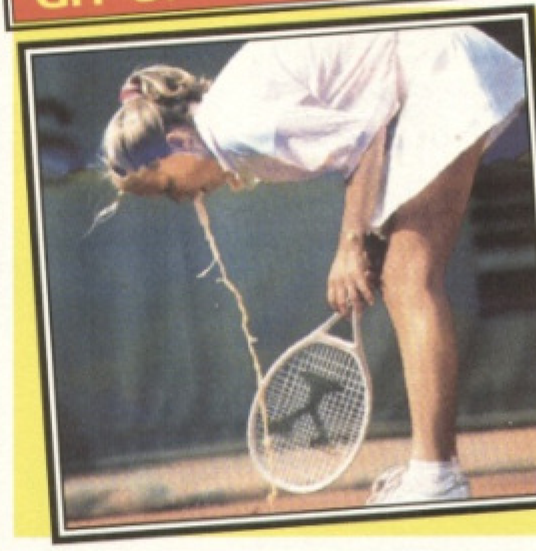
After last month's ritual humiliation of our beloved Editor, normality returns to Editorial this month. Yes, Cash For Photos is back! Another month of money-grabbing sods is here in all manner of strange poses dredged from the deepest recesses of our minds. So, with no further ado, let's get on with it...

SLEEPING DAD IN MAKE UP



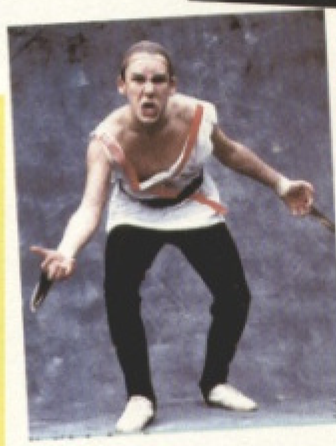
M. Mansell does the job on dad (Nigel?). I hope he went straight down the pub afterwards. The cheque's in the post M, old son...

GIT OF THE MONTH



We've lost the name of the reporobate who sent this in, but that's just as well as the rip-off merchant has just nicked the pic from a book anyway. Still, we'll print it and spend the money on ourselves. By the way, we can tell it was nicked from abook because of the bad cutting out around the edge. Doh!

MKII CHARACTER



The best we've had to date! Tom Cross wins £40 for putting tights on his head and pretending to be Baraka. What a geezer...

KITKAT IN GOB



One of many KitKats in gob (a full selection next issue), and one of the first. Nice one, Oscar, have £10 on us...

PEOPLE BITS

The worst thing I've ever eaten...



STEVE MERRETT

'When I was a nipper, my Dad always used to get home work late and eat after the rest of us. One day he was having steak and, being a cheeky young japester, I grabbed a piece of meat from the edge of the plate and stuffed it in my gob. As I walked away laughing I found it was a horrible bit of gristle and spat it in the bin. "Thanks," said my Dad, "I had to give up chewing that bit, too..."'



OZ BROWNE

Oz's worst nightmare is to do with a 'Grin To Get Them In' Wagon Wheel. 'I was chewing away on one,' he offers, 'and my brother started laughing and pointing. I asked what was up and he said that he'd pushed a greenfly into the chocolate and, sure enough, when I looked down at it, there was a horrid bit of green mush and legs sticking out.' Oz has never grinned to get one in since.



GUS SWAN

Macaroni Cheese. The scourge of the cheap meal brigade. A young Gus recalls a horrific tale: 'my Mum used to make this stuff and the only way I could stomach it was to eat it when it was piping hot as my freshly-burned mouth then couldn't taste it. However, I often left loads and, as a punishment my Mum forced me to eat a huge portion cold. It was the worst thing ever...'



DRESSED UP AS TV PERSONALITY

Philip Clarke, you are indeed excellent. Your Optimus Prime from Transformers costume made us laugh buckets. A well-earned £30 is on its way to you, mucker...



COVERED IN MUD

Oliver Dolphin (snigger. Is that your real name?) is a slimy sod. Literally. Beautifully contrasted by the white car behind which we hope you covered in handprints afterwards. £15 on its way.

'KICK ME' SIGN ON TEACHER'S BACK



Much more realistic than the last effort we had. Notice sleeping kid at front of room. Ever school has one. D Bailey (not THE David Bailey!) wins £15 for this.



WOTSITS IN EVERY ORIFICE

No covering letter with this, but out of all the Wotsit pics we got, this filled the most orifices. It was the eyes that did it. Get in touch, and we'll pay you. If you can still breathe after all that, that is...



CLAIRE COULTHARD

As a little girl, Claire wanted a mouse. Sadly, her Mum said no but the little lass bought one anyway. However, her Mum found and confiscated it, and Claire was sent to her room until dinner time. On sitting at the table, Claire was handed her meal and tucked in to the white meat. 'What is it?' asked young Claire, pointing to the chicken. 'You know what it is...' snapped her Mum, sending little Claire into fits as they imagined her Mum had served up her missing pet...



PAUL BUFTON

Whilst being all continental and working in France, Paul was served up a huge steaming dish of what appeared to be Tuna casserole. Eating it with gusto, he dabbed his face clean and asked the waiter what it was: 'brains casserole, monsieur,' replied the garçon cheerily. Yiiik!

THE LIST IN FULL

After the wealth of 'KitKat in Gob' and 'Rayden' pics, we've amended a few of the categories, and added some more. Get snapping...

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MATCHING VEST AND PANTS
SOCKS WITH GARTERS

Send you entries to the usual Mean Machines Sega address, marked 'CASH FOR PHOTOS.' You know it makes sense...

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STEVE 'reports' MERRETT
ART EDITOR
OSMOND 'scan-man' BROWNE
DEPUTY EDITOR
GUS 'interviewed' SWAN
DEPUTY ART EDITOR
CLAIRE 'picked on' COULTHARD
STAFF WRITER
PAUL 'paulie (barf!)' BUFTON
CONTRIBUTING WORDSMITHS
RICHARD 'your mum' LEADBETTER
TOM 'tosspot' GUISE
AD MANAGER
LIZA 'pendley' HAWKES
AD UMPAHLUMPAH
IAN 'the plane, boss...' THOMPSON
DEPARTING PRODUCT MANAGER
NICHOLA 'tara, luv' BENTLEY
INCOMING PRODUCT MANAGER
TINA 'could ya?' HICKS
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
GRAHAM 'give it to Steve...' TAYLOR
SPECIAL THANKS TO: Virgin — especially Pete Ball for 'It's A Knock-Out in Vegas. Which Steve won! Karen Shillcock. Sega for making Steve watch England lose 3-1 to Brazil.
SPECIAL NO THANKS: Indecision.
COVER BY
Mark at Shiny.

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PEOPLE YOU HATE
The hate lists have flown in, with Mr Motivator deservedly getting a caning. Still, it's nice to see he did his leg in. The entry printed next month will win some old cart and a cassette of 80s music Steve has on his desk. This month's winner, Darren Carter from Tring.
1. RUSTIE LEE: At least she's been fired. Irritating beyond belief.
2. AMANDA DE CADENET: Attention-seeking harpy.
3. LENNY HENRY: Stopped being funny years ago.
4. VICKI MICHELLE: Living off 'Allo 'Allo fame — which ended ten years ago. And she lied about her age, we reckon.
5. BARBARA WINDSOR: Now in 'Carry On Walford...' Woof.

NEWS

THE E3 ... RE!

Hello, Steve here. I went to E3 y'know. No really I did. I was in LA, home to gang shootings, the fattest people in the world, dirty air and crap telly, but also home to the all-new Electronic Entertainment Exponent show where all the latest Sega 32bit and Megadrive stuff was on show. A bit like CES but better. Sadly, I arrived back too late last month to get most of this in , but let's go wandering through the show's two massive halls, crammed with next year's hits. As Alan Partridge says: 'join me...'

SEGA™

Whilst the Sega stand was all very big and impressive, it was surprising to see the Saturn tucked away into a dark corner — especially since it went on US release during the show! Still, Sega had a very impressive selection of stuff on show, with support for the ailing 32X very impressive indeed. Oddly enough, there was no sign of the Megadrive/32X mutation, the Neptune, though. Let's take it machine by machine.

SATURN

In a dingy little corner, great wonders lurked...

VIRTUA FIGHTER II

Actually, this was just the demo of Pai farting around that we showed you last month. Looked smart, though.

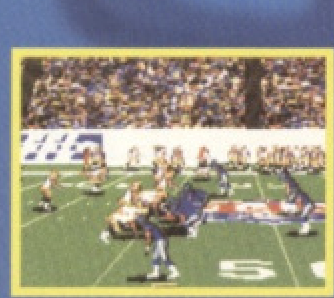
VIRTUA FIGHTER DELUXE

An experiment by AM2 to see how the Saturn can handle shading. Looked excellent and completely lost the crap polygon disappearances of the original Saturn code. Doubtful for release over here, though.

VIRTUA COP

A stunning conversion. Only one and a half stages were on show, but this looked incredible. Knee-capping, shooting baddies in the nuts — it was all there, and enhanced by brilliant screen update. Apparently, a gun is being developed for use with the game.

PRIME TIME NFL FOOTBALL



As detailed as Acclaim's NFL games, but with more use of rotational jiggery-pokery and scaling. The sound was rather good, too.



NBA ACTION

As far removed from the crappy Megadrive game as possible. More rotational gubbins, but perhaps lacking the finesse and variety of Acclaim's NBA Jam.

GRAND SLAM BASEBALL



28 teams await in this Hardball lookalike. Guess what? Yep, scaling and rotation ahoy (am I sensing a trend here?), but not really a huge amount over RBI and any other Baseball games you'd care to recall.

CONGO

Based on the Michael Crichton movie, but was never working when I walked past. Ah well, it's a diamond recovery mission apparently — shades of Jurassic Park Mega-CD, perhaps...

FREE RUNNER

An adventure game along the lines of the hoary old Activision classic, hacker. Invade a massive polygon-

FUTURE IS HE

generated Website as a murder investigation begins, with you acting as a binary Columbo.

STOP THE PRESS

SEGA HAVE CONFIRMED A FULL OFFICIAL SATURN UK LAUNCH ON JULY 8TH, JUST ONE WEEK FROM NOW! LAUNCH PRICE IS EXPECTED TO BE £399, WITH VIRTUA FIGHTER. MEAN MACHINES GUESSED RIGHT IN PREVIOUS ISSUES THAT SEGA WOULD NOT WAIT UNTIL THE AUTUMN. EARLY RELEASES INCLUDE DAYTONA USA AND WORLDWIDE VICTORY GOAL.

STREET FIGHTER: THE MOVIE

Complete arse, this. Although the graphics are new, once again Capcom have trotted out the same game code. Yes, there are new characters, but Street Fighter is starting to look rather dated now. As bad as the film, and that's saying something.



32X

A good variety of stuff, some really cool. Others just Megadrive ports...

SPIDERMAN: WEB OF FIRE

Rendered sprites are the order of the day, as Spidey is dropped into a rather smart 3D play area. Looks similar to past Spiderman games, but graphically superb.

RATCHET AND BOLT

Two robot cops of the future team up against a variety of bosses and the like in this split-screen blaster. Not a lot to see, but 33 weapons and over 2000 attack patterns makes it seem quite promising.



X-MEN

Programmed by Scavenger, the X-Men demo on show had a huge Wolverine sprite walking to and fro across a 3D room. The line removal and scaling was excellent, but the code was so early the baddies have yet to be put in. Looked ace, though.

VIRTUA HAMSTER

Yes, Virtua hamster. A skateboarding hamster, with only a rocket pack to help him, must flee his cage prison — whilst avoiding other animals and reptiles that rather he'd stay. Yes, really.

KOLIBRI

The 32X's equivalent to Ecco, with a Hummingbird taking centre stage. Kolibri the bird's world has been disrupted by a pair of crystals which have mutated his mates into all manner of ugly beasts. Fly, Kolibri... find those crystals and save the forest....

MEGADRIVE

There were more games on show for the Megadrive on Sega's stand than there were for the Super NES throughout E3. Where's Kong now, Mario. Heheheheheh...

GARFIELD

Making a game based on a cat that sleeps all day and eats Lasagne can't be easy, so Sega have thrown Garfield through time, leaving him to explore platform locations based on a variety of film genres — including horror and Casablanca. Good likeness, familiar gameplay.



AND THE REST...

ABSOLUTE

PENN AND TELLER'S SMOKE BY MIRRORS

Crap idea for the Mega-CD and Saturn by Absolute. Avoid.



ACCOLADE-

BARKLEY: SHUT UP AND JAM II

Yes, again. Still no sign of a release. Or improvement.

BEYOND ZERO TOLERANCE

Didn't look hugely improved, but played as well as the first one from what little was on show.

JACK NICKLAUS '95

Golf. Yawn.

ACTIVISION

PITFALL 32X

A bigger sprite and more levels. 'Nuff said?

RETURN TO ZORK

A PC convert, with live actors padding out the RPG scenario.

AMERICAN LASER GAMES

MAD DOG II

As if we hadn't suffered enough. More blurry, barely playable pap. Why bother?

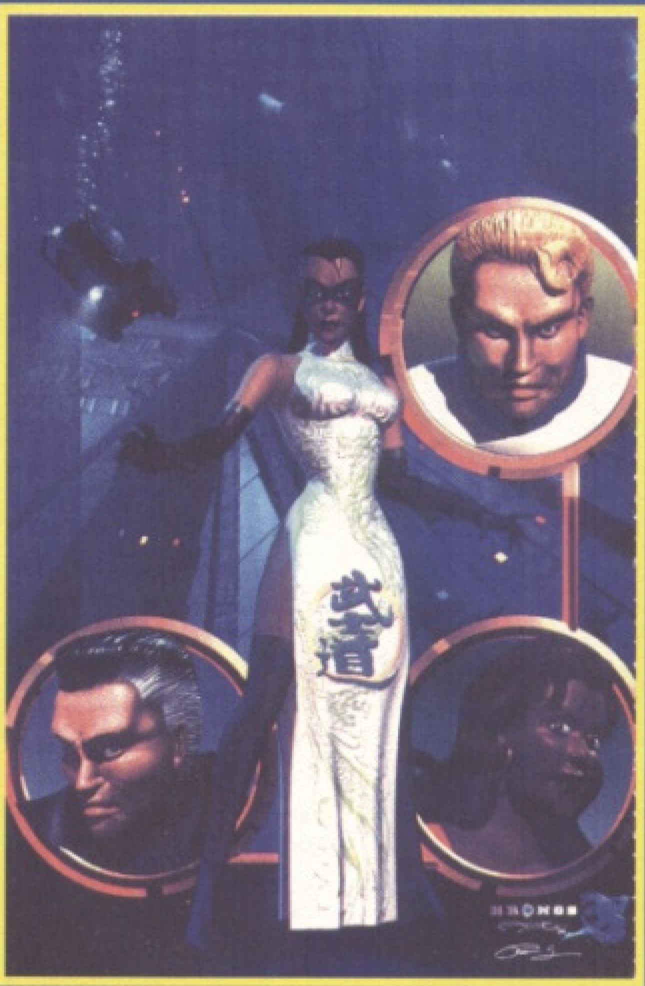


VECTORMAN

This looked really cool. Vectorman is a platformer starring a robot hero made up out of disembodied bits. The animation is tops, and there's loads of blasting action as VM battles through hordes of similar-looking robots.

X-PERTS

A team of counter-terrorism experts have been sent to infiltrate a renegade undersea nuclear base, and the player uses each of the team's special skills to make their way to the reactor core. It's going to be a huge 40Megs, fully rendered, this looks like the Megadrive's equivalent to that Bugs tv show. But without Henry from Neighbours.



Acclaim entertainment, inc.

A huge video wall was the first thing you saw as you entered the South Hall, with Acclaim running a music presentation of all their titles. As the likes of Dredd and Batman Forever were shown, a Gloria Estefan wannabe (with metal spine?) sang crap lyrics like 'Batman Forever, a movie you must see, two major stars: Val Kilmer and Jim Car-rey...' Still, they also had the Dredd bike and a mock-up Batmobile to see, and more games on their stand than most, including:

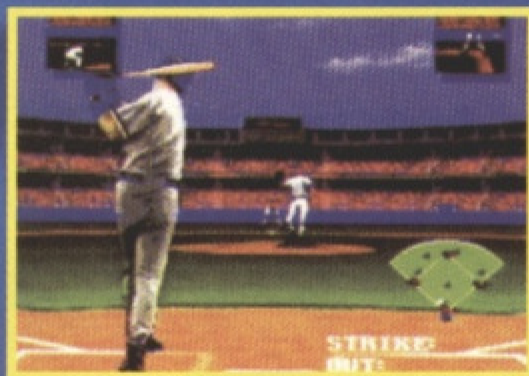


BATMAN FOREVER

Probe's vision of the film is a cross between MKII and Final Fight, with the player guiding a fully-rendered Batman through similarly rendered levels. Robin is there for a second player, and the animation uses Acclaim's motion capture gubbins and looked pretty good. A bit early to comment on how it played, though.

FRANK THOMAS 'BIG HURT' BASEBALL

Another motion capture jobby, featuring top player Frank who was digitally captured batting and stuff so it was ultra-realistic. Big sprites, and will be out on every conceivable Sega format.



CUTTHROAT ISLAND

The film looks a bit of a duffer, and Acclaim's platformer dumps a cutlass-wielding Geena Davis sprite into a slash 'em up world of Hook extras. The Megadrive version was barely playable because it was so early, but had a minecart level. Yippee.



SEPARATION ANXIETY

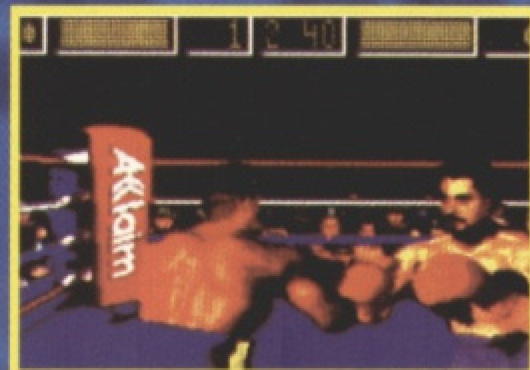
The sequel to Maximum Carnage, and whilst it looked very similar to the spazzy original, we're assured it plays a lot better. It picks up directly where Carnage left off with loads of people to hit and web. Oh, and it's all rendered, too.

REVOLUTION X

Yep, the Aerosmith game. An Operation Wolf clone, this looked very ropey indeed. The coin-op was no great shakes, and it'll take something a bit special to change our minds about this. Like a million quid.

FOREMAN FOR REAL BOXING

George Foreman, unlikely boxing hero and big cheeseburger fan, steps in for the motion capture treatment next in this smart-looking boxing sim. Huge, fully light-sourced sprites battle it out as the player's George sprite pummels 20 opponents into hospital. Looks promising.



NBA JAM: TE (SATURN)

Wow! What a conversion. The Saturn version of NBA looked topper — arcade perfect, in fact. The sprites are enormous and move fast, and the computer-controlled teams are both intelligent and varied. A corking conversion.

ALIEN TRILOGY (SATURN)

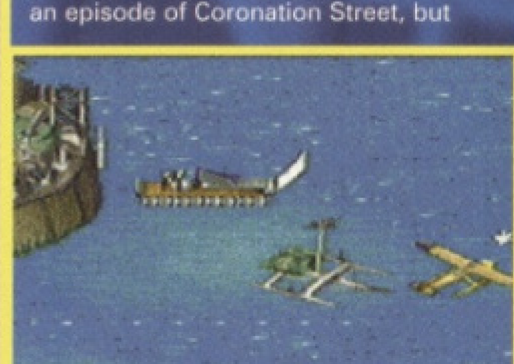
Although only a very early PlayStation version was on show, the Saturn game is said to be identical. A Doom clone, there's plenty to shoot with aliens leaping in from the walls and Facehuggers aplenty. The early version looked promising enough, and we'll be tracking this one very closely

ocean

he Saturn in a big way. The only Megadrive game on show was Waterworld, and sadly most of the Saturn stuff listed here wasn't visible either.

WATERWORLD (MEGADRIVE)

The film has been hit by more gossip than an episode of Coronation Street, but



Ocean are hoping the game won't be beset by the same problems. System 3 are handling the coding, and the game is a mixture of game styles with the player guiding a Kevin Costner sprite through a series of 3D shoot 'em up bits with rendered sprites and backdrops galore. Coo.

WORMS

A conversion of the Amiga mix of Cannon Fodder and Lemmings. Said to be extremely playable, and converted by original developers, Team 17.

ALLEGIANCE (SATURN)

Another rendered effort, but this time a 3D war game with the player scouring a post Cold War world in search of supplies and food — using whatever means necessary.

ROLL CAGE (SATURN)

Only the PC version has anything to see, but Team 17's Daytona challenger sounds promising.

TIME WARNER INTERACTIVE

Time Warner are hoping for the days when Dinosaurs will rule the Earth again, and as can be expected the assorted versions of Primal Rage were their hottest properties. Not everything on show will make it into the UK, but this is what they had.

PRIMAL RAGE

The Megadrive version was on show alongside the Game Gear one. But you know everything about this already. Actually, when I was looking at Primal this bloke sidled up alongside me, coughed to disguise a fart and walked away leaving me to look like a smelly sod. What a git.

ENDORFUN

A puzzler with the player guiding a rolling cube across a grid play area. The aim of the game is to match the colour on the top of the cube to that of a square elsewhere on the board. It's all very simple in theory but requires logical and lateral thinking as the action hots up.

T-MEK (32X)

Controlling a T-MEK tank the player is sent into a series of battlegrounds to face off against other MEK Warriors in a fight to the death. A one or two-player game, T-MEK was at a very early stage but looked very impressive nevertheless. Just what the 32X needs.

AMERICAN SOFTWORKS

TNT BASS TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS/ OUTDOOR TOURNAMENT

My feet hurt, I'm tired, some fat sod has just dropped Doctor Pepper down my leg, and you expect me to be happy about this kind of duffer? As for the second one: how many Bass



tournaments take place indoors!

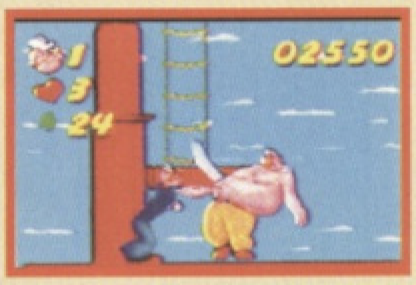
TECHNOS

KARTOON KOMBAT

Weak-looking beat 'em up. Thankfully, you had to look hard to see it.

POPEYE

This has been hanging around longer than a turd from a goldfish's bum. Great, there's a Game



Gear version due too.

GAMETEK

BRUTAL: ABOVE THE CLAW

Yes, now there's a 32X version.

HI-TECH

BEETHOVEN'S SECOND: QUEST FOR THE MISSING PUPS

This is getting stupid now. Movies, Games and Video's ever-present video release is given the game treatment. I think I'm going to try my hand at writing knitting patterns if this keeps up. Who decided there should be a game based on a turd film like that?

CAPCOM

Tucked away in a little corner area on the edge of the huge Sega stand, Capcom had a variety of beat 'em ups on offer. Obviously, they were concentrating on the Street Fighter Movie game, but as it's crap, I wasn't. Besides there was a pair of girls playing on the Saturn version who didn't seem to understand that you could only play as Ryu and Cammy, and no matter how hard you hit the pad buttons, Guile wouldn't be selected...

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

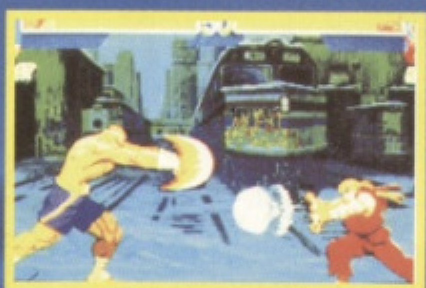
I really, really wanted to see the Saturn version of this. But it wasn't there. Arses. Still, we'll soon have a Saturn piccy of the game.

FOX HUNT

Capcom's first interactive movie has just completed shooting. CIA agent, Jack Fremont, is caught up in a whirl of double-crossing and danger. Gals, guns and gameplay are mixed with Jack's quest to stop a terrorist organisation. But not necessarily in that order.

STREET FIGHTER LEGENDS

Converted from the coin-op, and nigh-on identical, Legends returns Ken, Ryu and co, against Guy, Sodom and Final Fight characters. More of the same, but arcade perfect. Guile's mate, Nash, is in it, too.

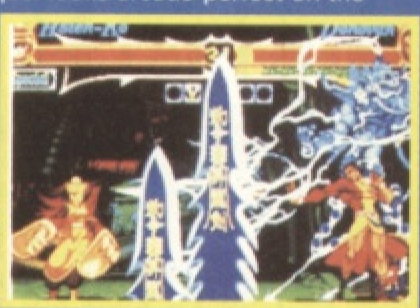


INCREDIBLE TOONS

A puzzler starring characters from Ghouls and Ghosts. Not on show.

NIGHT WARRIORS: DARKSTALKER'S REVENGE

The coin-op sequel looks arcade-perfect on the Saturn. Huge sprites, 14 characters, and combos ahoy make this a bit of a corker if you ask me. A little similar to the X-Men, though.



STREET FIGHTER: ANIMATED MOVIE GAME

Only vid shots were on show, but apparently the game will feature footage whipped from the Anime SF cartoon. Cast as a Monitor Cyborg the player battles with the Street Fighter heroes and learns their moves ready for the next opponent. Sounds like a familiar one-on-one beat 'em up, but we'll have to wait and see. Those divvy girls were looking for the joypad for the vid promoting this one!



DATA EAST

Another wimpy stand, but Data East are keen to support the Saturn, and are set to unleash a load of forthcoming coin-ops to the machine.

CREATURE SHOCK

Argonaut's Saturn conversion of utterly pants shoot 'em up. More playability promised: but isn't it always?

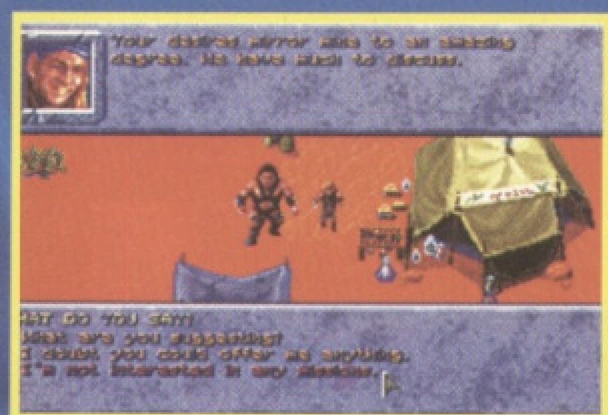


DARK LEGENDS

X-Men/ Darkstalker lookalike for Saturn. Looked pleasant enough.

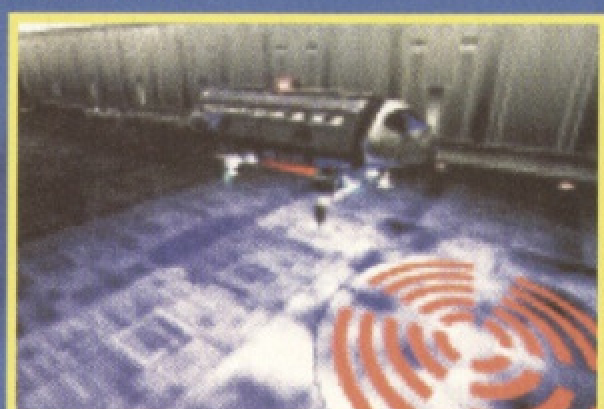
DARK SUN

TSL D&D fare. Snore.



DEFCON 5

Ray-traced interactive movie with mixes shoot 'em up bits with strategy moments. A rival to Wing Commander III?



MINNESOTA FATS POOL

Take it away, purleeeeease!

HUDSONSOFT

THE SPACE ADVENTURER



Mega-CD sci-fi thing. Looked Ok.

THE SPORTING NEWS VIRTUAL SOCCER

Hasn't really progressed a lot in the last year, but looks promising. Probe are handling the coding on this.



KOEI

NEW HORIZONS

Typical RPG fare.



ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS IV: WALL OF FIRE

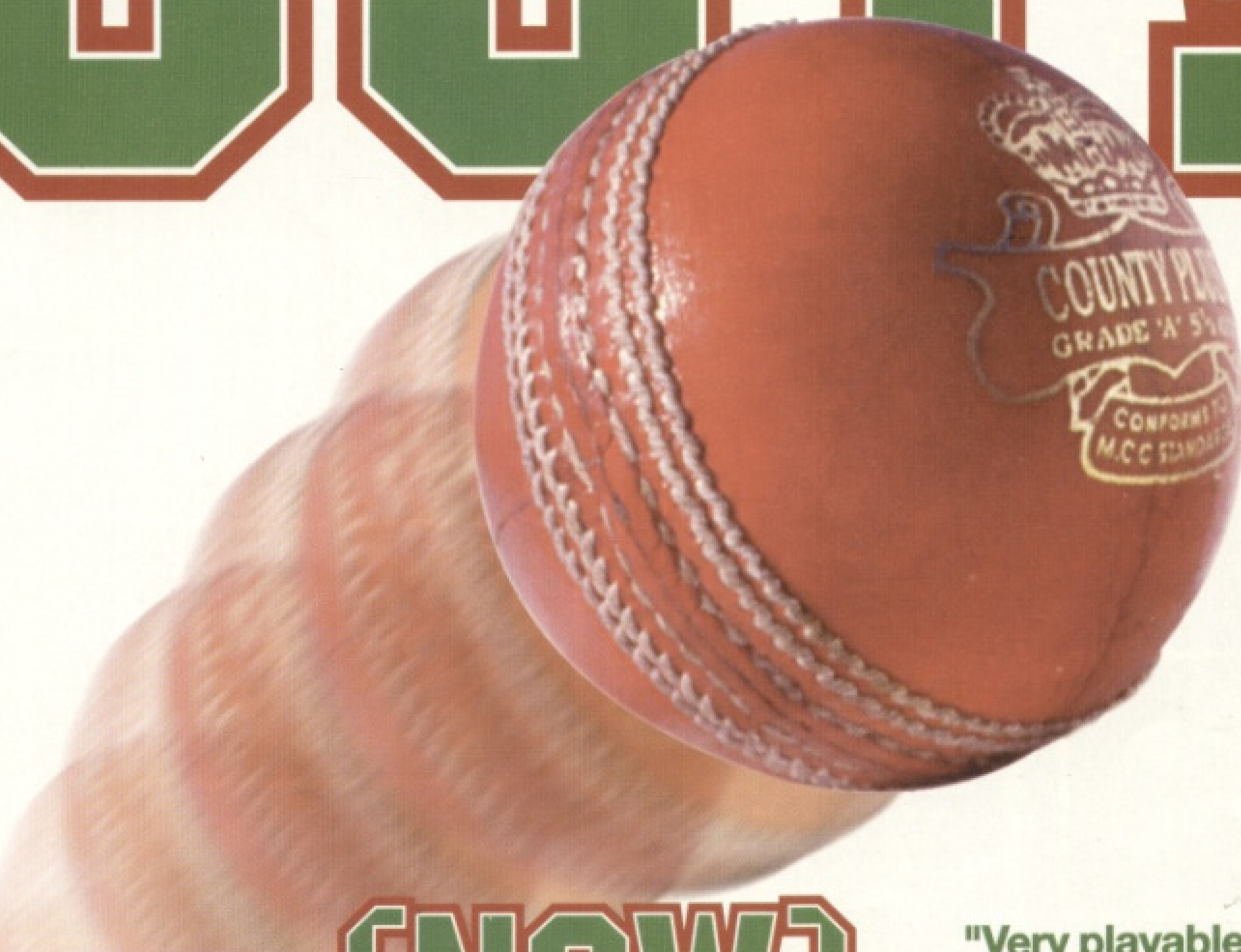
Glossy RPG with loads of digitised pics and animal noises.



KONAMI

No Megadrive stuff, although we

OUT!



(NOW)

"Very playable and addictive - an ace conversion of a classic sport to the Megadrive." Mean Machines

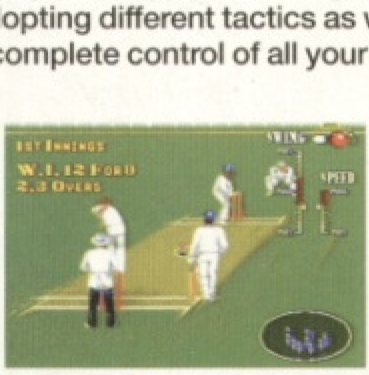
Brian Lara, the highest scoring batsman in Test history has joined the Sportsmaster team for this superb box-busting cricket simulation.

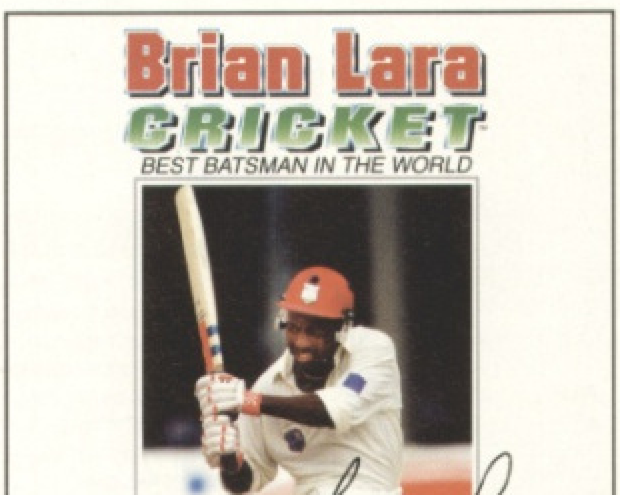
For the first time, square drives, on drives and cover drives are all on the Megadrive.

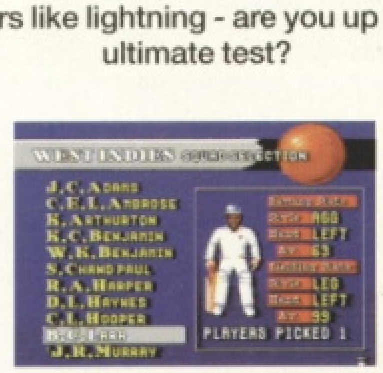
Up to 4 of you can play, selecting the team and adopting different tactics as well as having complete control of all your players on the field. You can even save the game using the battery back-up.

Bouncers, yorkers, googlies - everything except ball-tampering is right here, accurately reproduced in real-time 3D panoramic perspective!

You'll need judgement, cunning and fingers like lightning - are you up to the ultimate test?







Sportsmaster
NUMBER ONE PLAYERS

Codemasters

Lower Farm House, Stoneythorpe, Southam, Warwickshire CV33 0DL. U.K. Tel: 01926 814 132 Fax: 01926 817 595

JVC

JVC MUSICAL INDUSTRIES, INC.

Finally abandoning the Mega-CD, JVC are Saturn-bound with loads of rather smart stuff on the horizon. And Time Cop. Snigger. Their stand was a bit functional and they were giving out loads of plastic bike cups for some reason, but their Saturn titles are going to be well worth keeping an eye on.

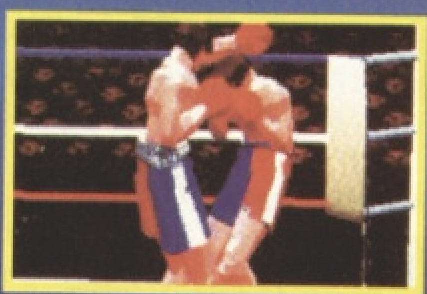
MISSION: DEADLY SKIES

A flight sim using fully light-sourced graphics, with the player going head-to-head with a variety of computer-controlled foes. In order to add pace to the game, JVC have also taken the liberty of adding 'special moves' to the player's inventory — the first time a sim has done so — and this allows the pilot to select from a number of fast turns and downward spins to get them out of trouble.



CENTRE RING BOXING

Normally, boxing is a bit of a crap thing to convert to a console, but JVC's Centre Ring looked brilliant. Polygon fighters slug it out with a number of camera views giving a real TV feel to the bouts. Stunning to watch, but as yet unplayable.



SPLIT REALITIES

A strolling beat 'em up, Split Realities mixes magic with fighting and RPG bits. Set in a futuristic city, the players steps into the fighting pumps of Solo Axelrod who's task in life is to restore the balance shattered by an evil magician. His home world has been somehow linked with a demon-infested city, and someone's got to sort it out. Guess who?

VARUNA'S FORCES

A Daedalus clone, with more than a hint of Alien Trilogy. Take your squad of space gooks through a labyrinthian maze of corridors as you attempt to destroy the very core of an alien invasion force.



SCREAMING WHEELS

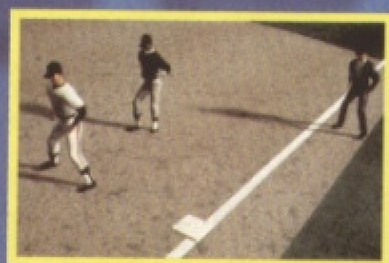
Not actually on show and expect the name to change, but we're promised a 007-style feast of driving action with oil slicks and guns galore. Blimey.

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

Sadly, BMG's stand looked like a big shoe box wrapped in bog roll, but inside lurked Saturn conversions of 3DO stuff.

3D BASEBALL

Rendered and luvverley-looking Baseball sim. Looked excellent, with loads of TV-style viewpoints. Cool.



GEX

The 3DO's only decent platformer comes to the Saturn. Starring a versatile lizard (called Gex, funnily enough), who battles bosses in the old-fashioned way. Not on show for Saturn, but the 3DO game was fun.



BLAZING DRAGONS

Created by Monty Python bloke, Terry Jones, BD is an adventure game. Nothing to see, but it could be similar to Discworld. Then again, I could be talking out of my bum.



SOLAR ECLIPSE

One of the nobodies out of Babylon 5 stars in this, but the game looks better than Channel 4's crap rival to Star Trek: TNG. A fast-paced 3D blasters with baddies straight out of Battlestar Galactica.



OFF-WORLD INTERCEPTOR

3D blaster, with incredibly detailed graphics. Another 3DO port.

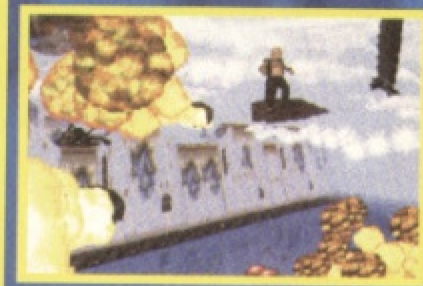


ELECTRONIC ARTS®

EA are well into the new wave of machines, and their Saturn stuff was amongst some of the most impressive at the show. FIFA 96 was by far the most impressive, but Magic Carpet and Viewpoint deserve praise, too. The Megadrive was a little under-supported, though, with another trio of ice hockey, American football and baseball games on their way and no sign of FIFA 96 for the machine. My feet were bloody killing me by now.

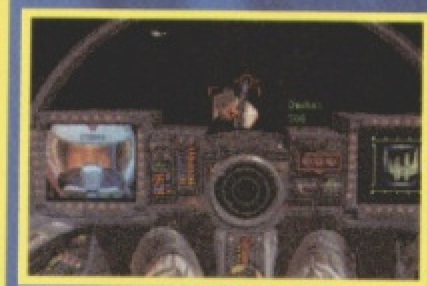
MAGIC CARPET

Not a lot to see, but Bullfrog are planning to take the icons from the main game screen in order to give full-screen scrolling that will blow the skidders out of your undies. Bullfrog are also planning a series of new surprises for Saturn Magic Carpet, all of which will be unveiled in our forthcoming WIP reet soon.



WING COMMANDER III

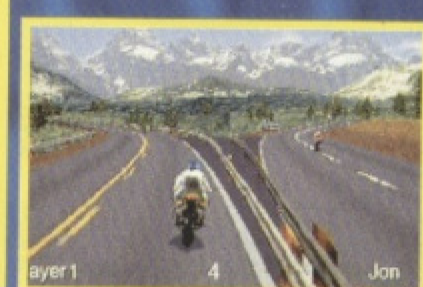
It's nice to see Mark Hammill's still working . Luke Skywalker himself stars in this Saturn conversion of Origin's space opera which sees veteran pilot Hammill taking a group of novices up against the



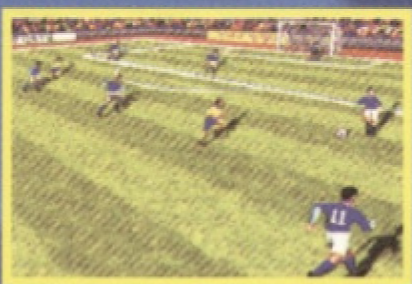
lion-like Kilrathi. Malcolm 'Generations, Tank Girl' McDowell, Ginger 'porn movies galore' Lynn Allen, and the bloke who played Biff in the Back To The Future series are co-stars, and Origin spent over £3m filming the three hours of live-action video which surround the basic blasting action. And, yes, a Wing Commander IV is also planned.

ROAD RASH

The old Megadrive favourite is given the Saturn treatment and the result is a game even better than the 3DO version. Large sprites, detailed backdrops and a variety of tunes only go to accentuate the already playable basic game, and all-new cities and rivals have been added. Again, more as soon as we can get it.



FIFA '96 One of the games of the show for me. FIFA on the 3DO was good to look at but a little dodgy in the play stakes. FIFA 96 for the Saturn, though, has more playability with the players using all the volleys, passes and flicks imaginable set against a panning camera which offers views which would leave John Motson speechless — and speaking of whom, apparently he's going to be dubbing the commentary for the UK game! Actually the in-game speech deserves a special mention as it is literally full commentary with the US game boasting 'Flynn passes to Boyd... he shoots...' Brilliant. We can't wait for this.



MADDEN '96
Not on show, but expect the same panning stuff as in FIFA. PGA 96 is due, too.

VIEWPOINT
Sammy's Megadrive version left a lot to be desired, but Saturn Viewpoint looks even better than the Neo-Geo version. Huge shaded sprites abound in this stunning-looking Zaxxon clone. Fast and very playable.



SHREDFEST
A snow-boarding game which was originally a Megadrive game called Face Plant. Uses the Road rash engine as the player boards down a 3D play area, riding bumps and punching anyone in the way. The 3DO version was the only one on show.



can confirm International Superstar Soccer is being converted to the Megadrive! YES! YES! YES! YES! A rather neat isometric killathon was on offer, too. But only for the Saturn.

MAXIS

SIM CITY 2000
Well excellent, this. Build a city, build it some more. Watch aliens



invade. Tax people to death. Brilliant, and a true Saturn classic.

NAMCO

CYBERSLED
A very early version the coin-op was on show which looked arcade-perfect. Cool. Their new air combat coin-op esd on show, too, and looked very nice.



PARKER BROTHERS

RISK
Tarted up version of the globe-trotting board game. You'll need mates, though.

CLUE
Cluedo for the Mega-CD. I think was programmed by Climax, actually. We had pics ages ago but thought it had been scrapped.

TRIVIAL PURSUIT
Mega-CD version with digitised



Virgin
INTERACTIVE
entertainment

An odd stand, decked out in our newspapers. The Saturn stuff made up for any decorative short-comings...



BLADE RUNNER

The big news as far as Virgin go. Westwood Studios, the team responsible for Virgin's forthcoming PC strategy blaster, Command and Conquer, are handling the programming duties, but as the licence is newly signed, there's nowt to see. According to Westwood, the game is set within the Blade Runner universe, with the player cast as a Harrison Ford-style character out to kill off rogue Replicants. More soon.

SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

Forget everything you know about Cool Spot! His latest outing drops him into stunning isometric worlds based on film genres. Looking really good, with nice anims and it plays nicely, too. I just hope they do a bit more with the pirate level in the final version...



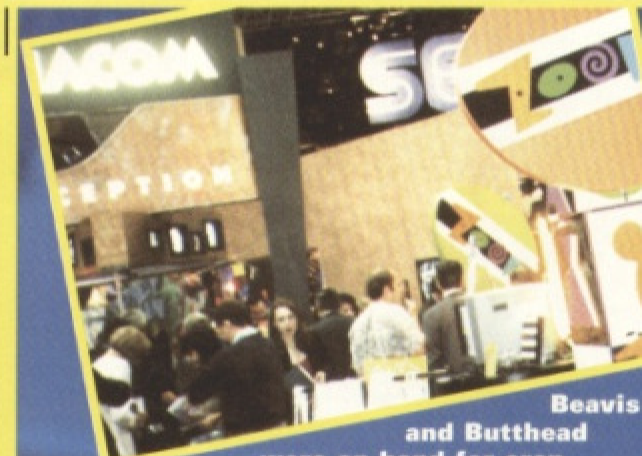
CONVERSE HARDCORE HOOPS (SATURN)

A big duffer this. A basketball game set on a variety of US courts. No scrolling, and looks more a Megadrive game than a 32bit whopper. Probably won't be imported to these shores. I hope not.

11TH HOUR

Much-delayed interactive movie for the PC. A Saturn version will follow hot on the heels of the completed PC code. Apparently, although it's very late it'll blow our socks off.

VIACOM
newmedia™



Beavis and Butthead were on hand for crap Polaroid photo opportunities, but by far the biggest buttheads were the leotard-wearing weirdoes who spent the entire show miming surprise and shock. Gits. They were on hand to promote a new Megadrive puzzler called Zoop which is said to be the most addictive thing since an eleven year-old's bath time.

ZOOP

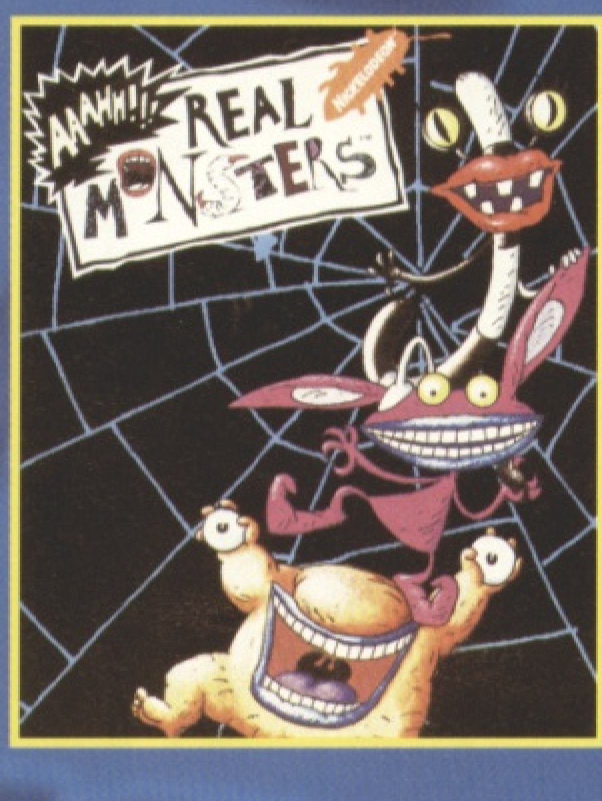
The reason for the saddos with the lycra. A puzzler, Zoop drops the player into a crossfire scenario where they are under attack from four sides. The only way to escape is by collecting a series of power-ups, but with hundreds of opponents on the move it ain't easy. Coming to Game Gear, Megadrive and Saturn.

PHANTOM 2040

A 60 level shoot 'em up based on a cartoon yet to hit over here. Adequate, but nothing special.

AHHH! REAL MONSTERS

Great title! Taken from the Nickelodeon cartoon, Ickris, Krumm and Oblina is a 25 stage test as the monstrous trio attempt to blag their way into their midterm exams. A little like Lost Vikings in that control switches between the three monsters.



pics to accompany the questions. 1-6 players can join in.

READYSOFT

A smart stand done out like Singe's castle from Dragon's Lair.

BRAIN DEAD 13



Graphically excellent Lair-style thing with the player escaping from a mad scientist's castle.

SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE

IRON HELIX

Originally touted to appear through Microprose, Helix is an excellent Doom/Daedalus clone



set to appear on the Mega-CD. Keep an eye out for the import review.

TAITO

BUST-A-MOVE

Stars Bub and Bob out of Bubble Bobble. A puzzler in the Tetris vein with the player lining up colour coordinated bubble for points galore. Worthy of a UK release.

UBI SOFT

RAYMAN

Yep. Still waiting. A mixture of platforms ideas, with Rayman planting flowers to climb up a



THQ win the award for 'the game shown at most computer shows.' However, seaQuest DSV wasn't on display at E3, but their other hardy perennial, The Mask, was. THQ were tucked away in one of E3's pokey meeting rooms, but Game Gear owners should soon be hailing them as their saviours as THQ most certainly have the battery-gobbling handheld's best interests at heart.

THE MASK

After more show appearances than Jimmy Tarbuck, The Mask finally appeared in an 80% complete form. And looked rather smart. The Carrey sprite whacks people with a hammer, flies through air vents and girns with all the style of his movie counterpart. Looks promising.



JUNGLE STRIKE (GG)

A very early version on show, but impressive nevertheless. Loses a little in the sound department, but otherwise it's all there.



URBAN STRIKE

Surprisingly, the Urban conversion is more advanced than Jungle Strike! Most of the missions have survived the conversion, and THQ reckon it'll be out in September.

MICHAEL JORDAN IN THE WINDY CITY (GG)

A bit poopy this one. The crap SNES game is bunged onto the Game Gear — and looks identical! Still a turd, though.

PGA EURO TOUR (GG)

Looked Ok, PGA '96 is also on the cards.

FIFA '96

If EA's Megadrive code uses the rotational scrolling they're promising, we have no idea how this is going to look on the Game Gear. Nowt to see for ages.

NHL '96

Nothing to see, but the last NHL was fine.

MADDEN '96

I sense a trend here. Nowt to see.

SUPER RETURN OF THE JEDI

The surprise signing, and looking quite good. The SNES shoot 'em up has been squeezed into the Game Gear and looks quite good! Only the Death Star raid and Chewie killing people levels were on show, though.





level, running across luverley backdrops, and battling big sprites. Very pretty.

VELOCITY

JET SKI RAGE

Never got to see this one. I was probably in the bog drying out fat boy's drink from my leg.



WORKING DESIGNS

POPFUL MAIL

RPG with big colourful intermission screens. From the people behind Vay.



Basically, E3 was a stunning show which, after some of the dross Megadrive stuff we've put up with through the last year, really gave the Sega scene something to look forward to. The Saturn, whilst tucked away in a dingy corner, had plenty to see, and the likes of Virtua Cop and VF2 are well worth the wait. Similarly, the third party stuff, as seen in Cool Spot II and MKIII were equally hot. Keep 'em peeled for more news imminently...

THE MEAN MACHINES SEGA MINI-QUESTIONNAIRE

You know us, right? There's Steve who sits on the bog in Q&A, Oz who colours in the pages, Gus with his funny cartoon beard, and Claire who all ten year-olds fancy. Oh, and Paul who has got Scabies. But we want to know about you. Or, more specifically, what the future holds in store for you. We're not interested in whether you'll meet a tall, dark stranger, though, we want to know what all this 'Next Generation' stuff means to you. Will you be buying a Saturn? Or are you quite happy with your Megadrive? To add a little incentive, we are offering one of you the chance to enter the 'Next Gen' a little earlier as one randomly-picked entrant will receive a spanking new, PAL Saturn as soon as Sega release them. But first... the questions:

1. Are you:

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. How old are you?

12

3. Are you:

- At school
- At college
- At university
- In part-time employment
- In full-time employment

4. Which of the following do you own or have access to?

	Own	Have access to
Megadrive		
Mega-CD		
32X		
Game Gear		
Saturn		
Super NES		
Game Boy		
Sony PlayStation		
Atari Jaguar		
3DO		
PC		
PC CDROM		
CDi		

5. How much money do you spend on games a month?

- £0-9
- £10-20
- £21-30
- £31-40
- £41-50
- £51-60
- More than £61

6. What was the last game you bought?

Sonic and knuckles

7. What machine do you plan to buy next?

- 32X
- Game Gear
- Saturn
- Super NES
- Game Boy
- Sony PlayStation
- Atari Jaguar
- 3DO
- PC
- PC CDROM
- CDi
- Other (please state)

8. When are you planning to buy it?

- 1-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-9 months
- 10-12 months
- Over 12 months
- Never

9. If you are entering the 'Next Generation', how much do you expect it to cost?

- £0-199
- £200-399
- £400+

10. If you intend to buy a Saturn as opposed to a PlayStation, what made you decide?

- Better than PlayStation
- Better games than PlayStation
- Think there'll be more games for it
- I'll be getting a PlayStation

11. How much do you expect to pay for games?

- £0-20
- £21-40
- £41+

12. What do you think of the quality of Saturn games so far?

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Dire

13. How do you think the Saturn compares to:

	Better	Same	Worse
32X			
Sony PlayStation			
Atari Jaguar			
3DO			
PC			
PC CDROM			

14. What three Saturn games are you looking forward to the most?

1.
2.
3. NOT ANOUGH GOOD GAMES TO LOOK forward to!

15. If you feel you can't afford a Saturn yet, what price would it have to be for you to afford it?

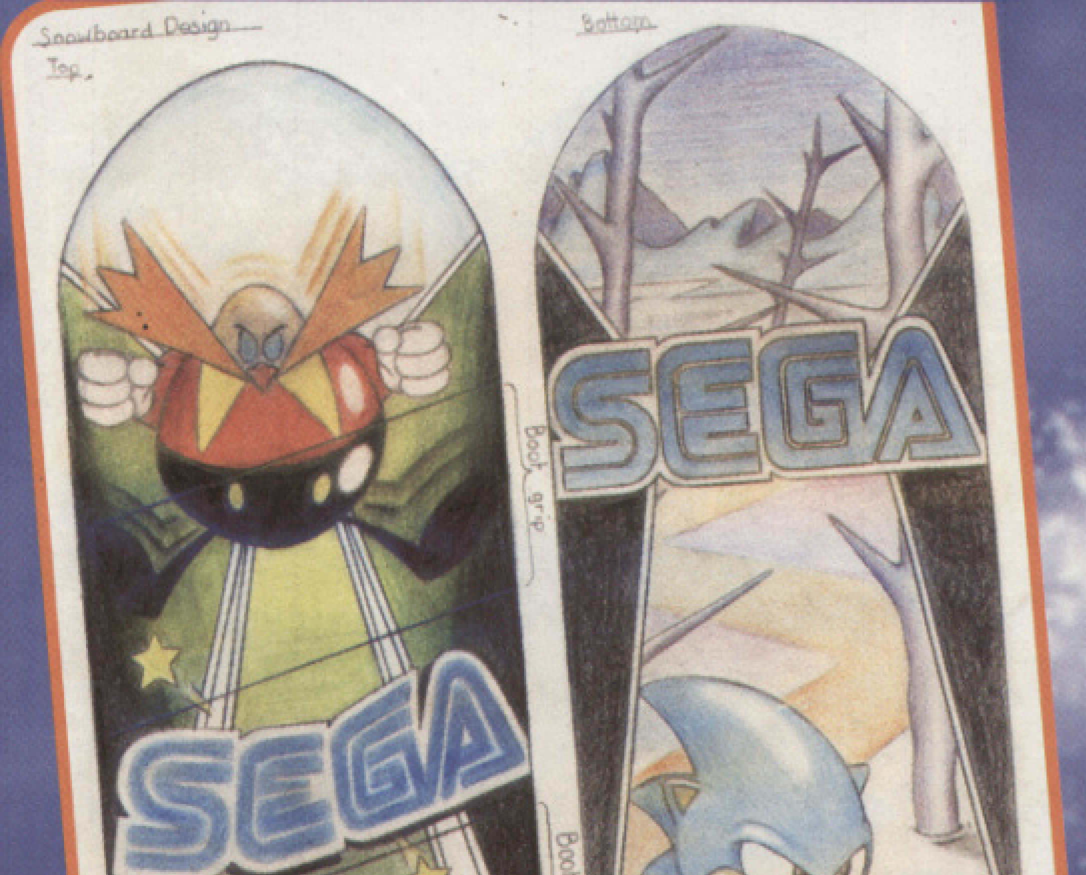
£5

Right, that's it. Put your complete form into an envelope and send it to:
SATURN AND NEXT GEN QUESTIONNAIRE,
MEAN MACHINES SEGA,
Priory Court,
30-32 Farringdon Lane,
London,
EC1R 3AU

Who knows, a Saturn could be yours (normal compo rules apply)...

SNOWBOARDING

Cast your minds back a couple of months ago and you'll remember the fantastic 'Design a Snowboard Compo' we ran to test those creative juices. As ever the response overwelming, causing an avalanche in the office. And so in the time honoured tradition we reveal the winners, and some of the losers in true MEAN MACHINES style.



FIRST PRIZE

WINNER OF MEGADRIVE + 32X + DA KINE HAT!

As ever there can only be one winner and Sam Whitfield from Pettistree, Suffolk impressed the judges with his fantastic rendition of the blue flash and bad old 'Botnik egg-head. Excellent work my son!

RUNNERS-UP

FIVE WINNERS OF VIDEOS AND DA KINE HATS



Peter Fenton from Bradford, West Yorkshire. Innovative use of board shape, although we're not quite sure how well it would perform in the snow.

COMPO WINNERS!



Darren James from Weoley Castle, Birmingham. Colourful montage of the Sega console crew in a stylish watercolour wash.



Daniel Reeves from Byfleet, Surrey. Surf Foddder rocks! Great use of characters and shading.



Paul Nery from Streatham, London. Welcome to the next level! Cool colours and use of the system logos.

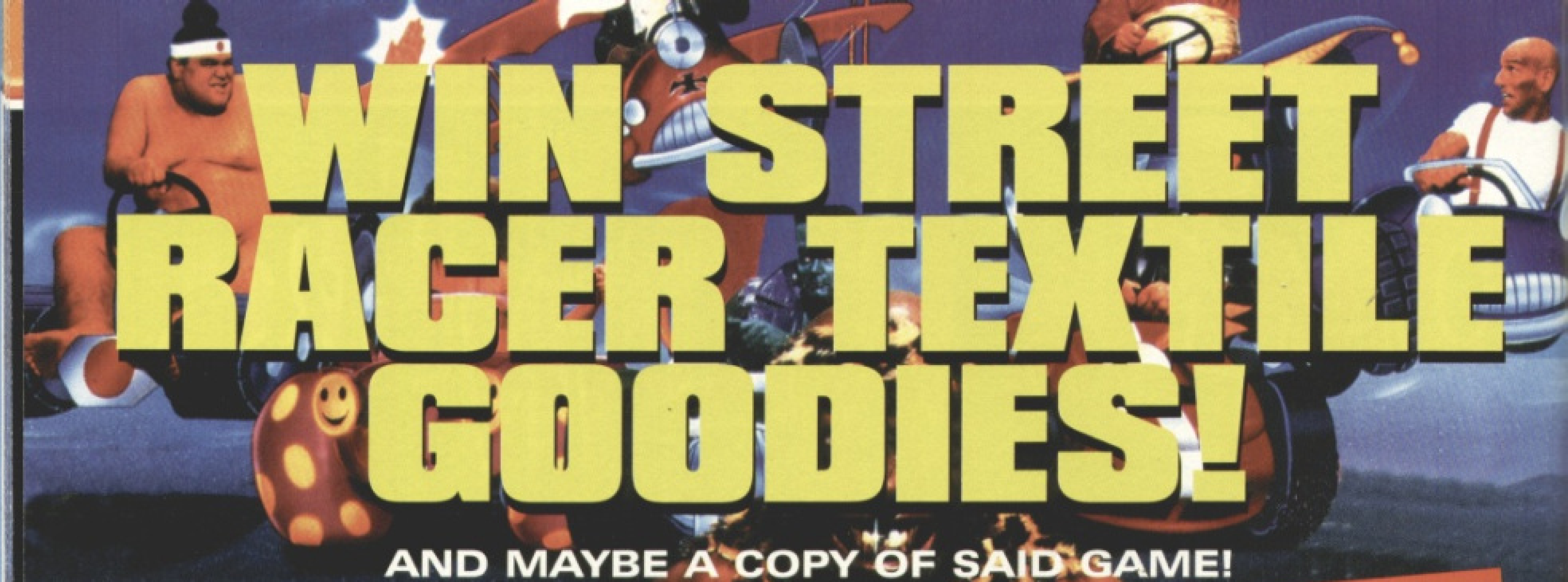


Jon Fenton from Bradford, West Yorkshire. We're not sure if you're related to the other Fenton, but nevertheless we were impressed by your clear and clean design work.

DESIGN HALL OF SHAME

Every compo has its winners and losers, but why do we also get such a load of sad old crap? The guilty shall remain unidentified in their glorious lack of artistic talent.





WIN STREET RACER TEXTILE GOODIES!

AND MAYBE A COPY OF SAID GAME!

Alright, it's comp-ee-tition time. Normally that might be a time to turn-off, because, let's face it, your chances of winning are pretty slim. You can't draw, you're stupid, and there's usually only one prize for the compos you can enter. But not this month. This time we have plenty prizes

This month's giveaway, courtesy of gallic good guys, Ubi-Soft, has a T-shirt flavour to it. That's becausing we're giving away the most successful fashion item of the 20th century. Namely, the T-shirt. Well, not one T-shirt but about, oh 80 of them. Ubi-Soft have given us 10 limited edition T-shirt for each of the game's eight characters, totalling 80 prizes. How can you fail to want one of this year's alternative brady bunch. If you win we'll try to match your preference for Surf Sister, Frankie, Ralf, Biff or others, but as these T's are so exclusive, you may have to take what you get. But it would be a pretty lame compo without Street Racer the game itself. The ground-breaking, neck-breaking speedfest scored highly three months ago, with its innovative programming from Vivid Image and unique four-player 3D head-to-head. But money might be tight at this time of year, so isn't it lucky that we've got five copies to just give away? And five four-player multi-taps so you can't miss that shoulder-to-shoulder action. So what do you have to do to get your hands on the booty. Well, it's one of our infamous design-'em compos. You see, Ubi-Soft are already thinking about the next generation versions of Street Racer, and there may well be room for new characters. We want YOU to design a new character; a drawing, an idea, whatever.

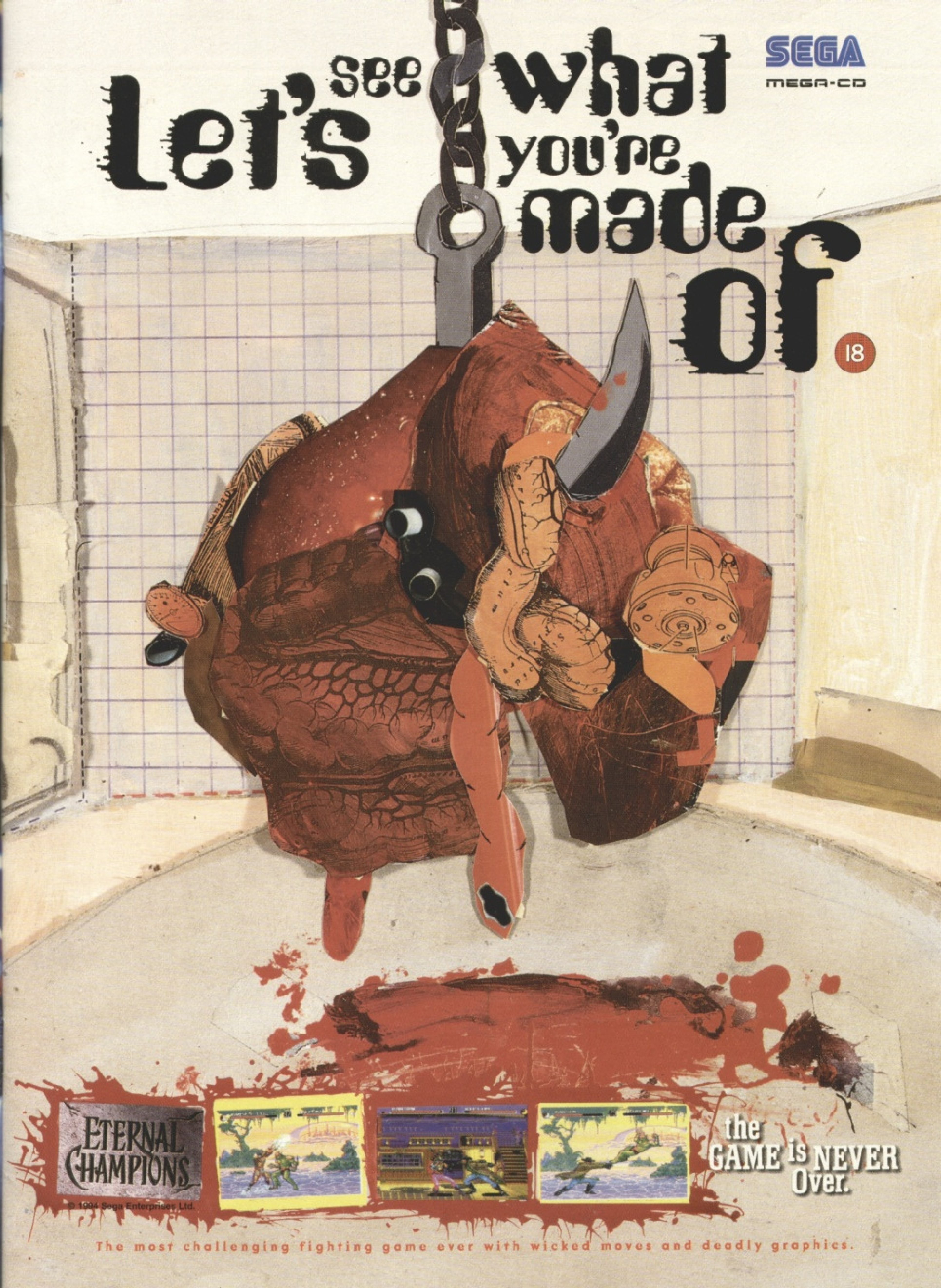
***PRIZES:* 10 T-shirts of each Street Racer character. We will try to match your preference, but supplies of each character are limited.**

***TOP PRIZES:* 5 copies of Street Racer on Megadrive, each with a four-player multi-tap.**



Send it to us at MEAN STREETS COMPO, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. Make sure it arrives before the 1st August. Normal competition rules apply. The Editor's decision is final.




SEGA
MEGA-CD
Let's see what you're made of.
18
ETERNAL CHAMPIONS
© 1994 Sega Enterprises Ltd.
the GAME is NEVER Over.
The most challenging fighting game ever with wicked moves and deadly graphics.

PROJECT	EARTHWORM JIM II
PUBLISHER	VIRGIN
INITIATED	DECEMBER '94
RELEASE	OCTOBER'95
FORMAT	MEGADRIVE
DEVELOPERS	SHINY ENTERTAINMENT

EARTHWORM JIM

Undoubtedly one of the greatest platform heroes of all time, Shiny's space-faring worm is about to touch down for a second bout of Megadrive lunacy. Needless to say, we were the first to greet him...



Look! Real grabs. Not crappy pics taken from a video. Don't be fooled, people. RIP SP...





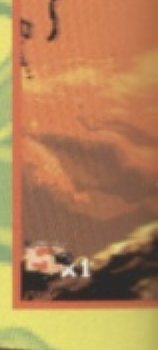
The 'Test Your Strength' machine. Home to those hairy blokes who run bumper car sites at fairs.



The worm that turned is back. Earthworm Jim, besuited hero of Shiny's stunning Megadrive debut, has recovered from seeing his loved one killed by the cow he inadvertently launched at the start of the first game, and faces thirteen all-new levels and sub-games. Featuring a host of familiar faces, EWJ II sees a freshly-redundant Jim traipsing off to the Planet Of The Monsters with his mate Snott in search of a holiday. However, rather than the rest and recuperation they expected, the Planet Of The Monsters actually played host to... well, truckloads of slavering reptiles and hairy beasts. Whilst Jim and Snott flee, in the meantime their old mate Peter Puppy has been busy on the family front, and is the proud owner of a family of 600 pups. This being the weird world of EWJ, though, a genetic defect means that Peter's puppies are transformed into the vicious monsters populating the planet when upset. Enter Jim's arch-enemy, Psycrow, who has seized upon this as his chance to take over the planet with an army of permanently upset pups which he intends to use to invade the galaxy and finish off Jim for good. Throw into this unlikely mix a marriage between Psycrow and Princess What's-Her-Name which Jim must stop, a new Salamander outfit, and a brace of new weapons and ideas, and you have the first of several missions set to tax our limbless hero...

GUN-G HO

As would be expected of a sequel, Jim's armoury has been expanded from two to seven bullet types! In addition to the usual bullets and homing missiles introduced in Jim and the CD edition, Jim II adds bubble bullets (which are a little weedy to say the least), lasers, and a rather impressive smart bomb to his ammo pouch — the latter of which lights up the screen in a retina-scorching white-out. These are found in icon form lying around the play area, and are readied for immediate use when collected. But, hey, you probably knew that already.





I went out with a girl like that once. She had legs like milk bottles in tights.

Paul Bufton carries his new girlfriend over the threshold. Heeheehee.

The alien warrior, Thryaxio, was distraught to find a fried egg on his ear.

I'LL PASS ON THAT

One common gripe Shiny received regarding the first game was the lack of password system. Initially, the idea was dropped as they felt it would make it too easy, but they relented for Interplay's Mega-CD version, and have made a compromise for the sequel. Scattered throughout the play area are signs marked with pictures of Jim, the Earth and other such icons. Individually, these aren't of much note, but if Jim touches all three during the course of the level, he is rewarded with a password when he reaches the end.

HOME, HOME ON THE STRANGE

Planet Of The Monsters lives up to its B-movie name, by containing some of the weirdest critters imaginable within its thirteen stages. The Megadrive game is being written alongside the Super NES code, with Andy Astor writing half the levels and porting them over to Nick Jones whose handling the Super NES code, and vice versa. Listening to criticisms of the first game, Jim II features more variety than the original, with more hidden areas, special power-ups and sub-levels. Shown here is half the first stage — Tangerine Dream — which acts as a warm-up to the main game and allows the player to familiarise themselves with Jim's new capabilities.









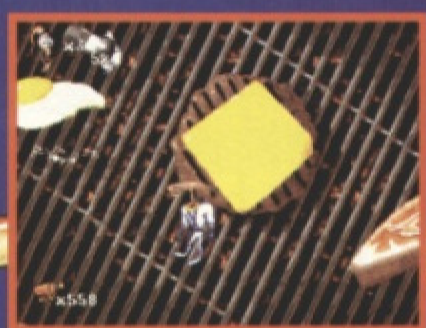
The yet-to-be-coloured 'Balloon Head' sprite.

WORMING MY WAY BACK TO YOU, BABE

As is the norm in a sequel, EWJ II endows our wormy wonder with even more special moves and abilities. Before the game is released in October, Nick and Andy aim to make Jim dig, clamber, and swim — in addition to his customary running and jumping moves — but here's what's in so far...



BALLOON HEAD:
Shown here as a development sprite, Jim inflates his head to float through a vertically-scrolling level.



HELICOPTER HEAD:
An old fave, but improved so it can be used at any time and with a number of speed settings!



PUPPY SAVING:
Holding a soft marshmallow, Jim jumps and dives to guide Peter's kin to safety.



SNOTT PARACHUTE:
Slows Jim's descent when Snott is called into play. A variant of the helicopter head.

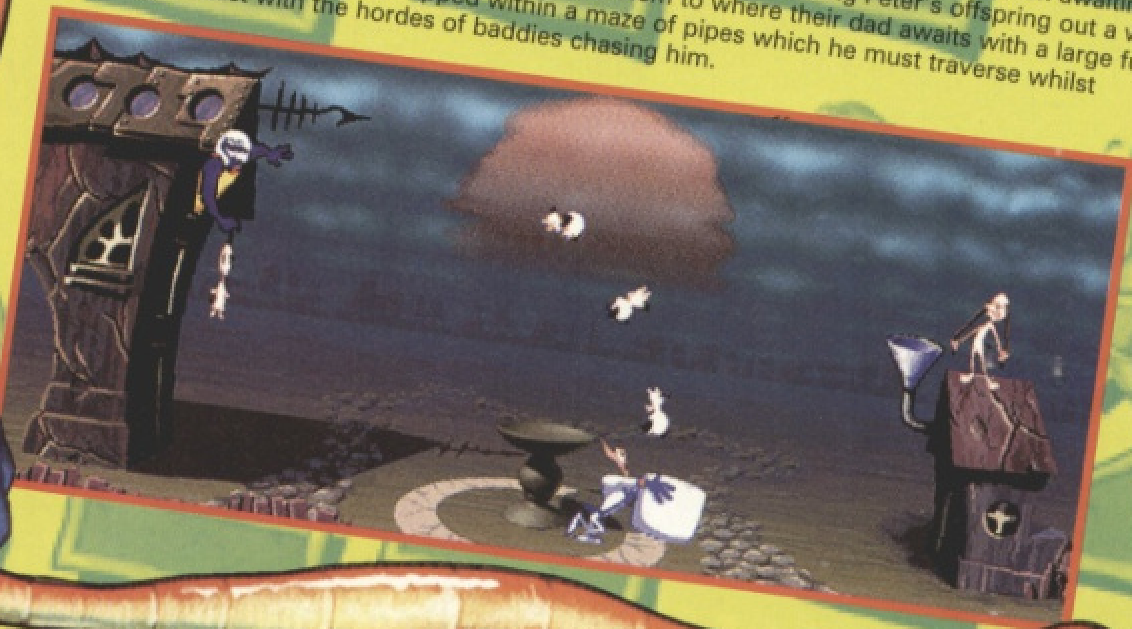


'Speak Your Weight' gag: 'One at a time, please...'

WANNA SEE SOME PUPPIES?

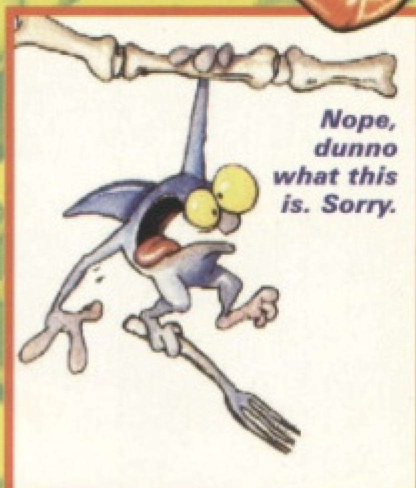


Replacing the 'Andy Asteroids' stage and that odd whipping scene against Psycrow are a wealth of all-new sub-games. As of yet, the actual running order of the game hasn't been decided, but the new sub-games include a trip to Peter Puppy's house where the game mimics those old Game And Watches where the player bounces babies into an awaiting ambulance. Rather than babies, though, Shiny have Psycrow tossing Peter's offspring out a window whilst Jim uses a marshmallow to bounce them to where their dad awaits with a large funnel! Another stage sees Jim trapped within a maze of pipes which he must traverse whilst avoiding contact with the hordes of baddies chasing him.

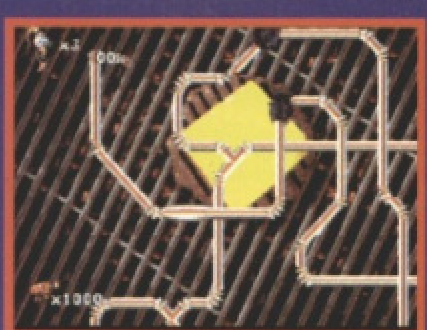




This... this is a chop that spits fire. Yep, I deduced that all by myself. Try doing that from a video screenshot.



Nope, dunno what this is. Sorry.



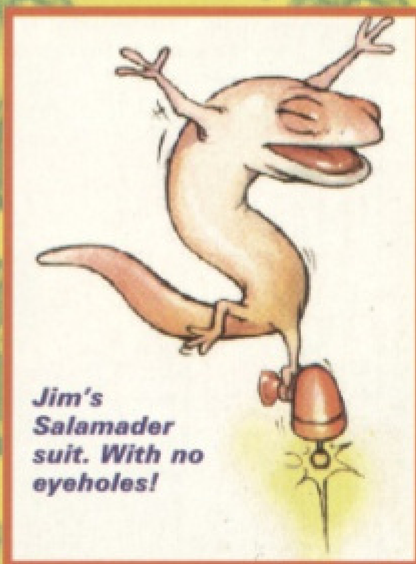
PIPE CLEANING:
Er, wriggling around inside a pipe. Yes, really.



SNOTT SWING:
Jim's allegiance with Snott allows him to swing across gaps using the green blob to stick to the underside of platforms.



SALAMANDER ACTION:
Jim dons a Salamander outfit which he cannot see out of! Still, what he loses in sight, he makes up for in flying skills.



Jim's Salamader suit. With no eyeholes!





I met Michael Fish at Sky TV. I told him that anyone could do his job...

CENTRE STAGE

A lot of the first Earthworm Jim's stages drew their names from people working at Shiny. For instance, 'Andy Asteroids' was the brainchild of Megadrive coder, Andy Astor, and this trend is set to continue into the sequel — including a stage called Lorenzo's Soil named after graphic artist Mark Lorenson. Although the level names are subject to change, here's Shiny's initial briefs on the levels completed so far:

Lorenzo's Soil Named after the crap Nick Nolte film, and a level which sees Jim digging for treasure and archaeological goodies in the soil of Burbank, USA.

Worm Burger A food-based stage, with Jim assailed by all manner of falling kitchenware. Uh-huh.

Peter Pound And Mary
The 'Game And Watch' level. Seen in its entirety elsewhere.

Villi People
Where Jim dons the blind Salamander suit for a flying maze level — set inside a living entity which grabs anyone stupid enough to touch the walls.

Evil's Funhouse Where all the worst circus performers wreak a twisted revenge. Very weird.

ISO 9003
The greatest battle of all: Earthworm Jim and his incredible suit against the taxman...

The Flyin' King
No, nowt to do with Disney. Just wanton carnage.

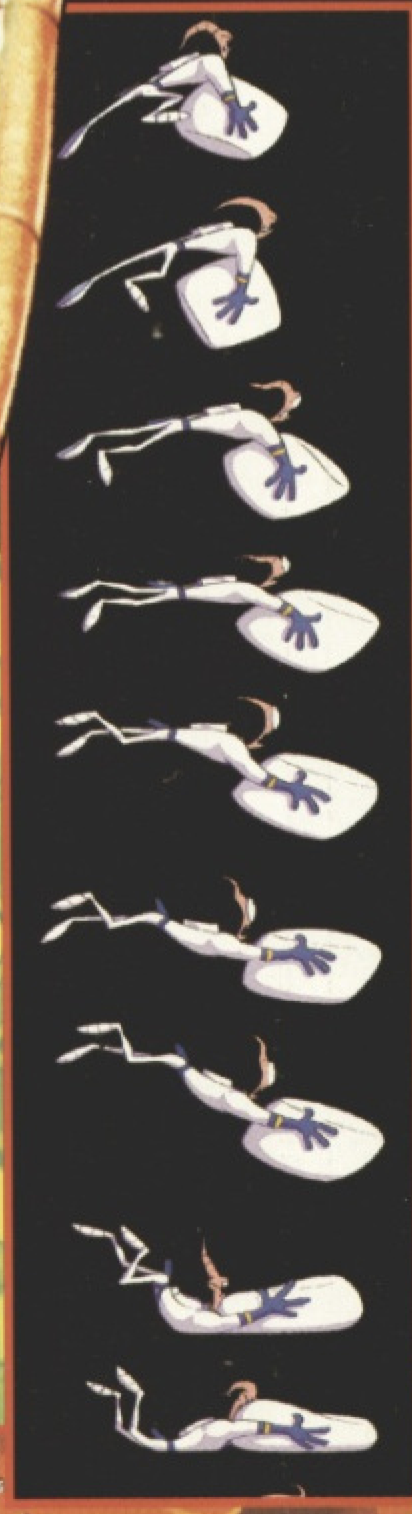
The Cathedral The final level. Jim must get to the church on time in order to stop the wedding between Psycrow and Princess What's-Her-Name.





Grabbed by someone's stomach lining.

It won't take long to learn our song, there's nothing quite like a McDonalds...



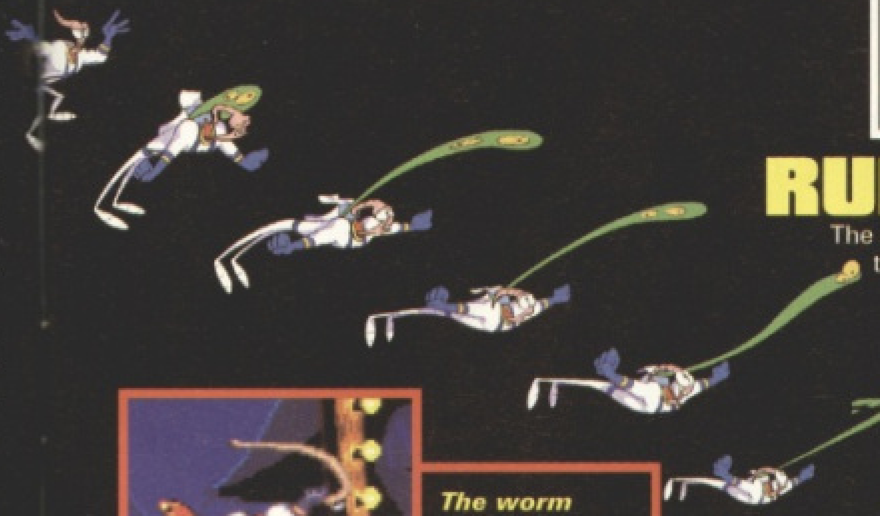
An example of one of Jim II's puzzles. Unable to pass a sea beast, Jim uses a handy pig to stun the watery monster...





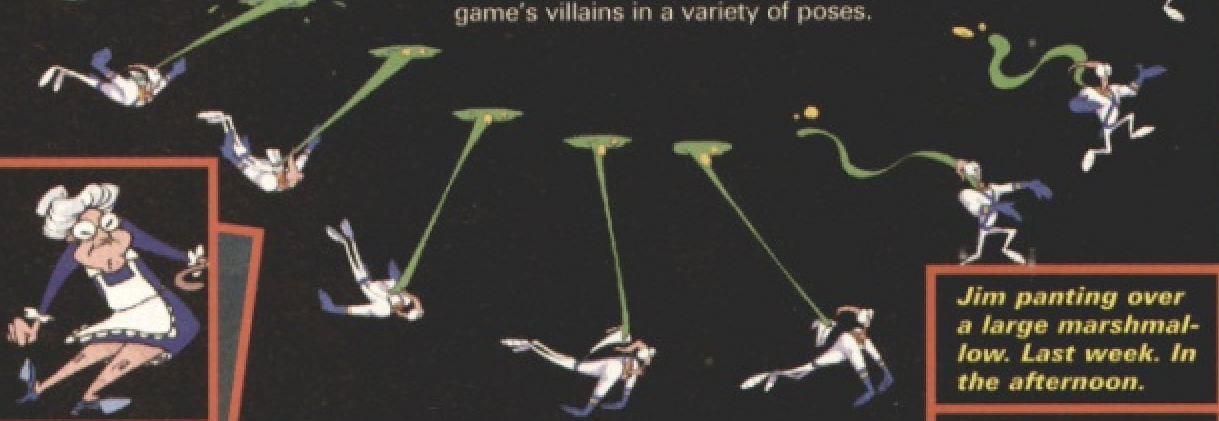






RUN! RUN LIKE THE WIND!

The actual Jim sprite is considerably larger than before, and Shiny's animators have taken the chance to invent one of those names graphic artists like to coin for the way he moves. That name is Animotion II (Jim I used the first Animotion), and Jim's actions are taken from a real worm wearing a hi-tech suit. Actually, that's crap. Animotion II means that Jim is drawn full-size using a series of rendered and detailed images, and squished down into the Megadrive. For the sequel, Shiny have used over ***** frames just to make him run, jump and do all the kerrazy things he is renowned for. The same system has also been used to bring the large supporting cast to life, and Shiny's office is littered with sketches of the game's villains in a variety of poses.





The worm with the whip is back...



Wahey! Go on, lady. Show us your cacks.



Jim panting over a large marshmallow. Last week. In the afternoon.

SHINY, HAPPY PEOPLE

The team behind EWJ II are responsible for some of the greatest video games of our time. Nick Jones, the guy handling the Super NES code was responsible for co-creating the Wally Week games for the Spectrum alongside Shiny boss, Dave Perry, whilst graphic artist Steve Crow wrote the extremely cool Starquake for Bubblebus over ten years ago. Sadly, we can't credit Andy Astor with any cool games as he used to work on dull cad-cam stuff for big companies until he saw the light and worked on Jim I. With the recent acquisition of Shiny by Interplay for a five-game deal, it seems unlikely that Dave Perry will add anything to the mix, but he is hoping to get a few weeks to himself so he can add a level of his own design. Here's hoping...









WORK IN PROGRESS

PROJECT
SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

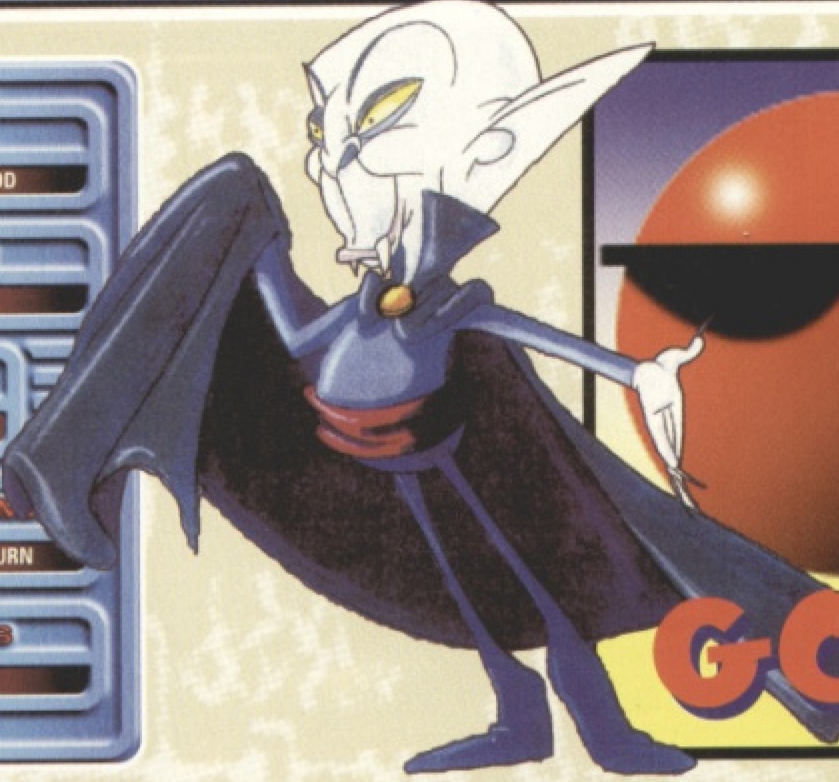
PUBLISHER
VIRGIN

INITIATED
JANUARY 94

RELEASE
OCTOBER 95

FORM...
SATURN

DEVELOPERS
VIRGIN US





America. Land of the free, home of fat blokes drinking huge cups of Dr Pepper. And the place where the long-overdue sequel to a platform fave is currently nearing completion. Steve was the jammy sod with the plane ticket...

Remember a time when we were all on tenterhooks wondering if Street Fighter: Championship Edition was going to be any good? When the Saturn was just a ringed planet, and the only 'Next Generation' was Star Trek-related? It was a time when the Master System still had hope, and when Virgin's Dave Perry collaboration threw up a hero famous for appearing on American bottles of 7-Up. Yep, Cool Spot had arrived and, before we became soured by repeats of the game engine in the form of Aladdin and Jungle Book, he was something of a breath of fresh air.

Now, after two and a half years off our screens, Spot has returned — but in a form so far removed from his platform debut. Yes, Spot has made the upgrade to the 32bit kingdom, with Virgin's sequel leading on the Saturn and 32X formats before shuffling along to the Megadrive a little later. Abandoning the side-on view of the original, Spot Goes To Hollywood opts for an isometric perspective with the little red dot, running and jumping through a series of film-related levels, collecting red tokens as before and emitting all manner of hip squeaks and burps. The game is being coded by Virgin's US division, and that's where we were given an exclusive peek at the 50% complete code...



Tiffany refused to let the age gap split them up.



The train strike bites deeper.

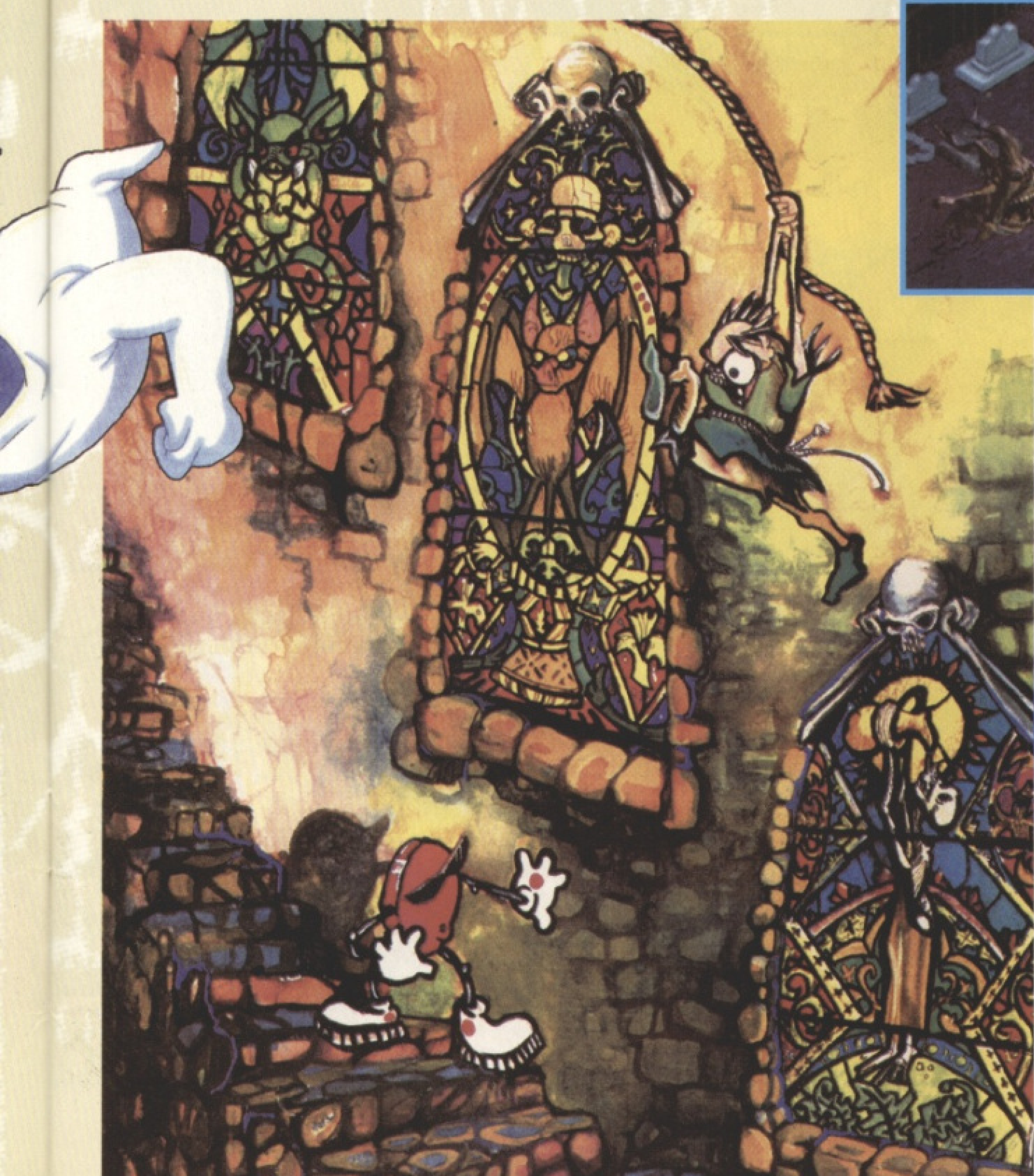


My name's Bernard Bresslaw! EAT SHOES!

SPOT

S TO HOLLYWOOD







Cool Spot prepares for an evening of lurve...

SPOT PLOT

Back gracing the cans of America's 7-Up cans, following his exploits in the first game, Cool Spot finds himself adorning a can left in a cinema projection room. As the game opens, a fully-rendered intro sequence sees Spot peel himself off the can and start looking around the room. However, as Spot wanders around the darkened film canisters, the projectionist returns and Spot starts looking for a place to hide. Running across to the film projector, Spot leaps into the machine's inner workings, but gets snagged up in a reel of film currently playing. As the intro changes, we see Spot landing on the reel and being pushed towards one of seven film genres. A huge gate sporting the level title passes over Spot's head and the game begins, as does Spot's main task of getting back to the safety of his can in one piece...





AHOY, ME HEARTIES

The isometric levels are all spoofs of popular film genres and titles. At the time of writing, Spot's first port of call is a pirate world which takes ideas from 'Pirates Of The Caribbean' and 'Mutiny On The Bounty' and, as such, features ideas including huge sharks, peg-legged salty sea-men with beards only ever seen on old ladies (and Brian Blessed), and planks to walk. With the game roughly 50% complete, the order in which the levels run has yet to be decided, but currently in development are horror, sci-fi and adventure stages, with assorted nods to the likes of Alien, Star Wars, countless Dracula and Frankenstein B-movies, and a certain Fedora-wearing Mr Jones reflected in the graphical themes. Similarly, more specific film scenes have also been recreated, including a stunning mine cart ride straight out of 'Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom' and a jeep sub-game with Spot rapidly trying to out run a pursuing T-Rex. The name of this later level? Triassic Park, funnily enough...



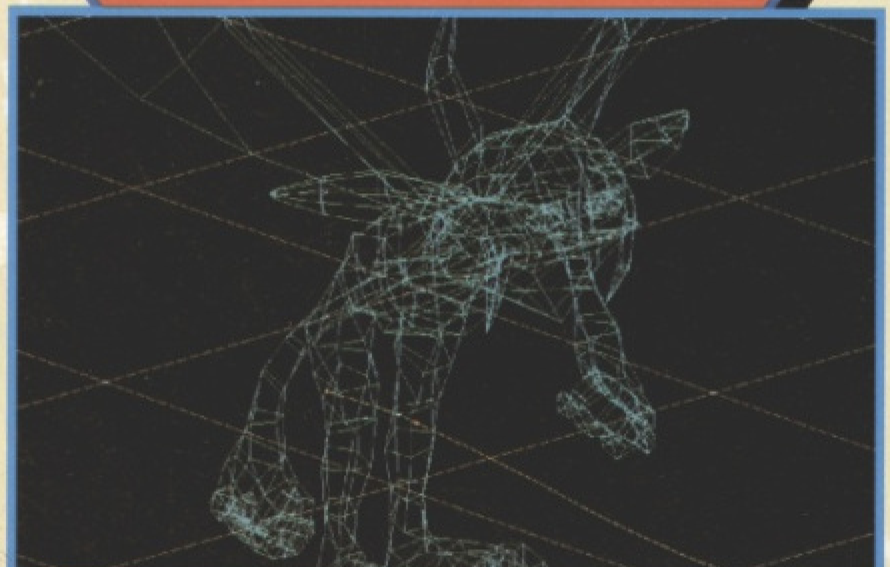


RETURN TO RENDER

Forget everything you know about Cool Spot. No longer is the little red blob an ordinary sprite. Nope, with the advent of the Saturn, Virgin US have gone to town with a number of SGI workstations and art packages to bring Cool Spot bang up to date as a light-sourced sprite exploring a rendered world. With the basic ideas down on paper, the programmers then plot where enemy sprites will be on the game map. From here, the object is then plotted as a series of small vectors in 3D Studio (a snoot design package) until a full 3D image has been created. The image is then rendered with the artists setting a definite light source for shadows and effects. This pattern is then repeated for every frame of animation the object uses — which in the case of the game's scary trees (which lunge, swipe and link together with a skipping rope), is a very time-consuming process. Needless to say, but before we're swamped with phonecalls from wishful thinkers, no the Megadrive version will not be rendered...

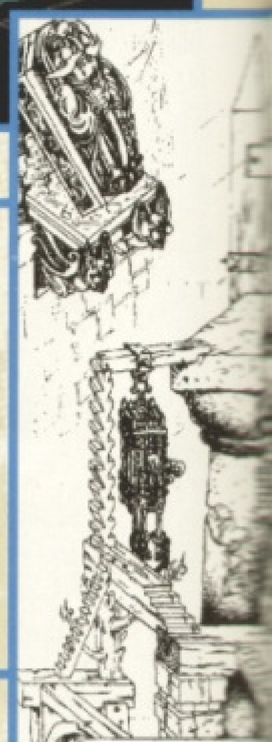


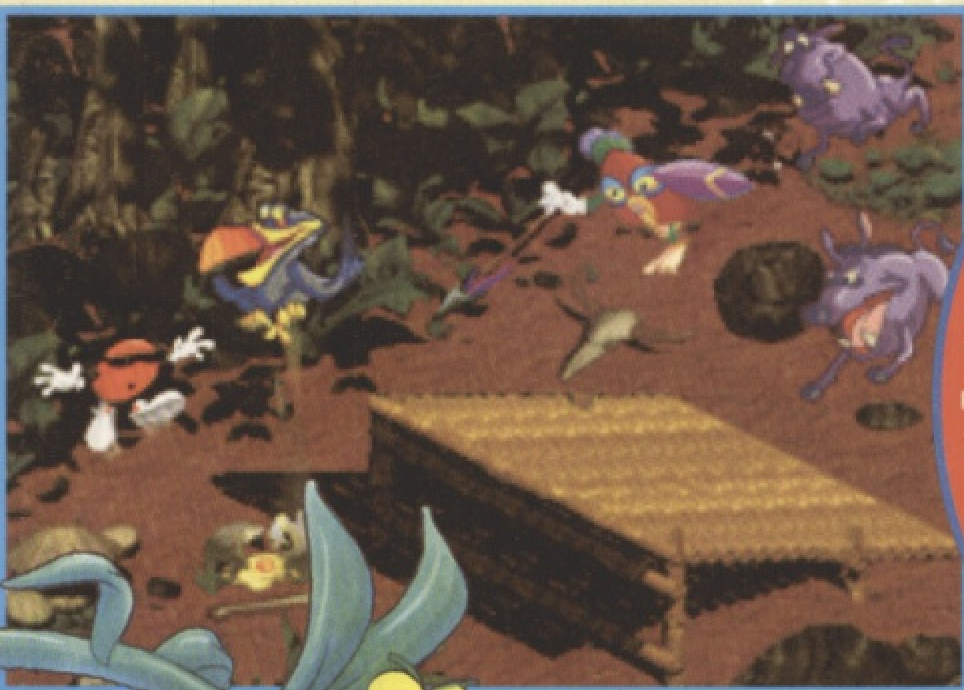
A wireframe tree read for rendering. It is.





Careful with that axe, Eugene...

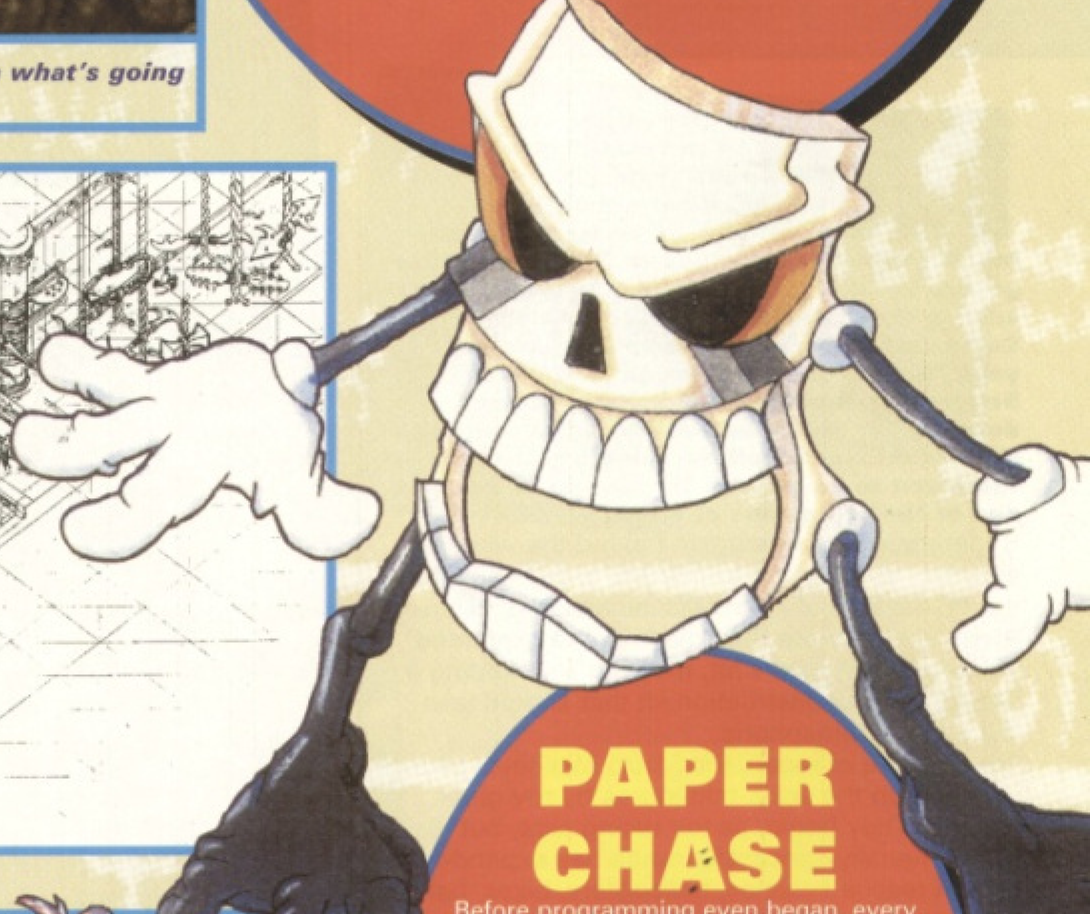


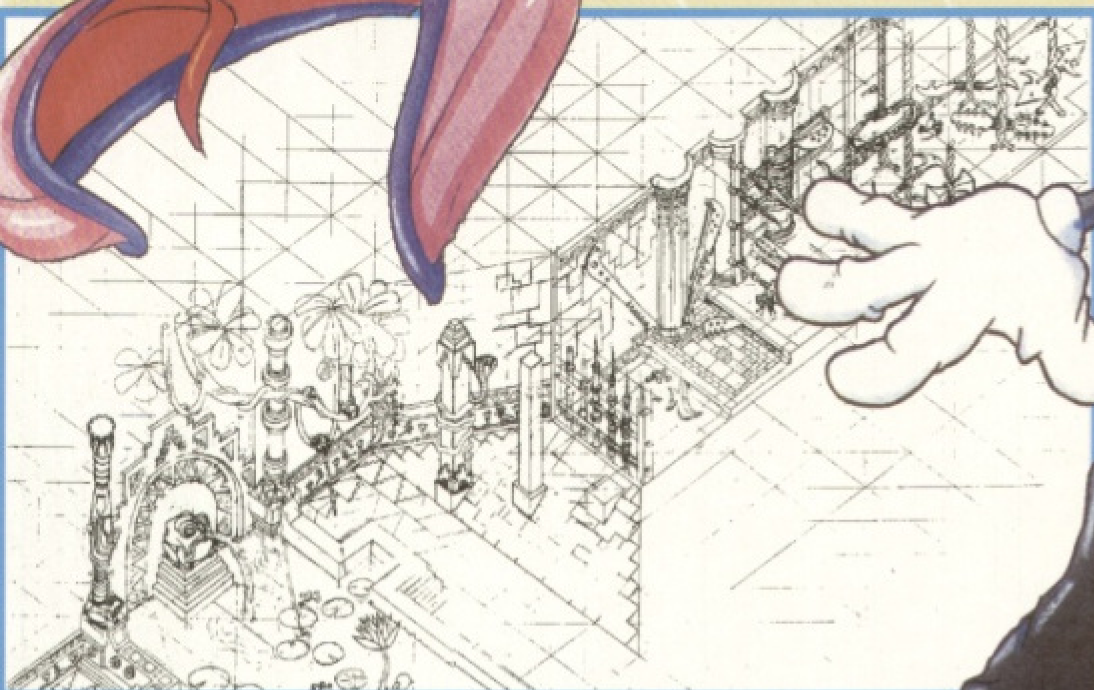


Nope, no idea what's going on here.

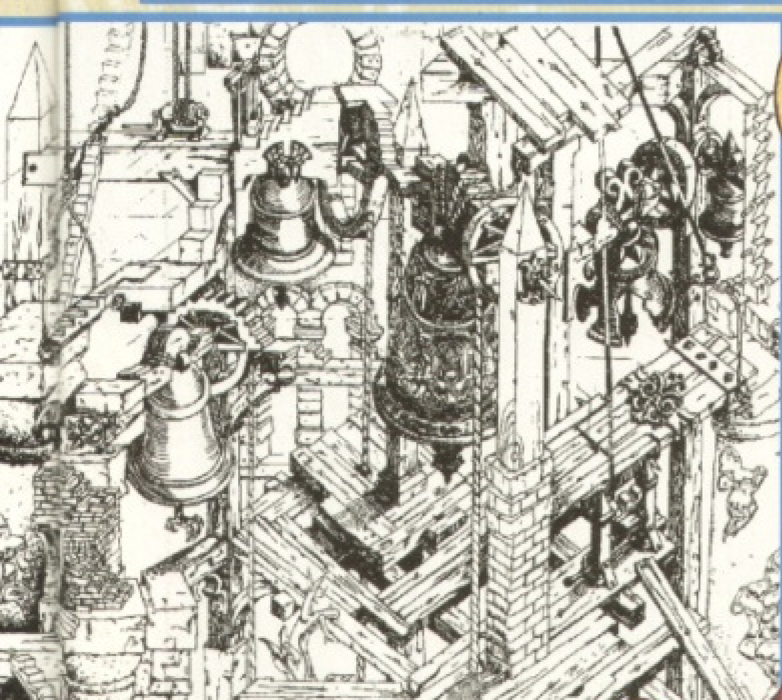
MISSION IMPROBABLE

Spot Goes To Hollywood is a forty-stage epic, with the little red hero running, jumping and shooting his way through sprawling levels based on a number of film categories. In keeping with his abilities and missions in the Megadrive game, Spot's basic mission is to get to the end of each stage as quickly as possible. However, life is never that simple and bonuses galore dot the way to the levels exit. Red 'Spot Points' punctuate the scrolling stages and for every 100 collected grant the player with an extra life. Similarly, all manner of baddies are out to stop him — including trees, pirates and ghosts — and should either be avoided or shot with his famed Spot power. Whilst the basic gameplay is fairly familiar, though, the Virgin US guys are also keen to add puzzle elements to the basic mix. As such, for Spot to progress past seemingly impassable points, switches must be tripped and smaller brain-teasers solved.





An early sketched level, complete with baddies. Yep.





PAPER CHASE

Before programming even began, every aspect of Spot II was put on paper. When the game first entered development eighteen months ago, the team started work on the Megadrive code with the basic idea of placing Spot in the isometric play area. However, with the release of Saturn development kits and the potential for placing the red hero in a full rendered play area, the time-consuming Saturn version has taken priority. Every character within the game has been plotted and placed with the game engine from an original paper sketch, and the game maps and intro screens have also been ported in the same way. The benefit for Virgin US of doing this is that the sketches can then be scanned into one of the SGI workstations, ready for conversion into 3D and rendering, or just ported as they are ready for inclusion in the Megadrive and 32X versions. In addition, with everything plotted and ready for insertion, it also allows the programmers to keep tabs on how memory-intensive things are getting.

PROJECT	MICRO MACHINES 2 '96
PUBLISHER	CODEMASTERS
INITIATED	FEBRUARY '95
RELEASE	OCTOBER '95
FORMAT	MEGADRIVE
DEVELOPERS	SUPERSONIC

Supersonic, that defiant little team who rob the big boys of their mega sales at Chrimble times with their incredible Micro Machines series are doing in again. And this time it's construction time. Gus put on his hard helmet...



Mirror, mirror on the wall — what's the bestest game of all. NBA Jam? Nah! Fifa? Hmm, maybe. What about Micro Machines 2? Now, you're talking. We'd be hard pressed to find many other games in the annals of MEAN MACHINES that scored the huge 95% overall score that Codemasters definitive racer did late last year. And the hard work was all done by Supersonic, Codemasters' highly-praised developers. It was inevitable that a sequel to the sequel would follow, and we were over the moon to be offered the chance to break one of the big games of 1995.

Supersonic are once again behind the wheel, and they are seeking to add the experience that the PC version of Micro Machines 2 has given them. Not only are they planning an expanded version of last year's hit, they are also adding a breakthrough construction kit that should take the game stratospheric.

For the sake of recap, the Micro Machines series is based on the scale miniatures by toy giant Galoob. They began as toy racing cars, but the phenomenally successful range has expanded to take in rescue vehicles, helicopters, bikes, balloons and airships, even astronauts and a gnat-sized version of 'Airforce 1' the US President's personal jet.

The game reflects the plethora of vehicles by pitching all kinds of craft against each other, and within the kinds of setting that you would play with them — gardens, garages, school desks and the dinner table. The game also uses the patented J-Cart, which plugs four joypads directly into the cartridge. Taking things further, Supersonic devised a mechanism allowing eight racers to compete, in Micro Machines 2. For the new game, all these features have been retained, with further league and tournament events, with a structured time trial, letting you save record times to the cart's extensive back-up.



ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Some of the brand new racing environments sound very promising, and the graphics on the ones we've seen are crisper and more detailed than before. Already in place in the 'Carry on Camping' level which has dragsters risking life and limb on a barbecue, replete with bangers (as in sausages, not old cars), and primus stove. The gymnasium has you tackling fitness equipment, swerving round dumbbells and racing up treadmills. Generally, there will be more specific hazards within each environment as the 'sudden death' nature of the game is one of its best features. Other tracks in progress include:

SCIENCE LAB

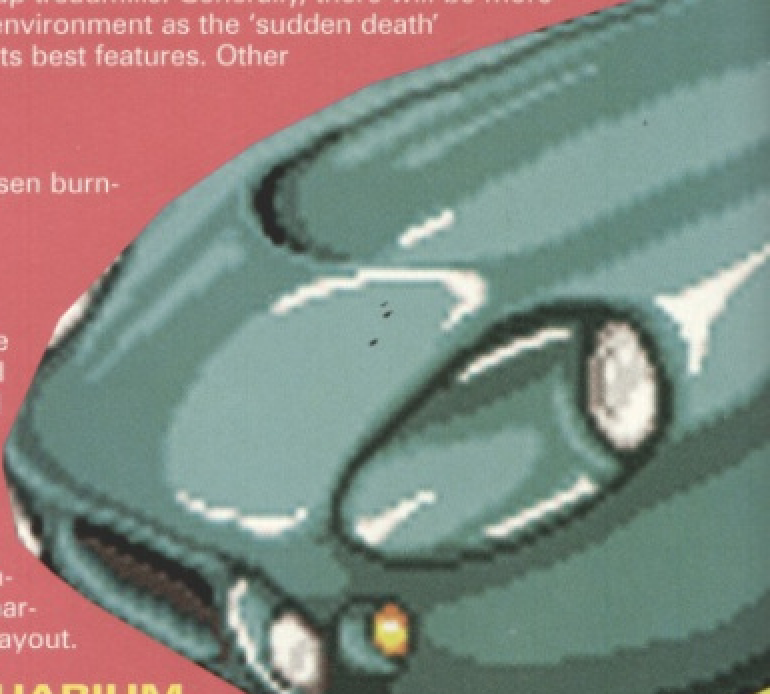
Chemical-filled sinks and bunsen burners.

TRAIN SET

You get the chance to drive police cars — with sirens! The layout winds through a model train set, with hazardous level crossings.

CORRIDOR CHASE

This one is intended as a high-speed race in jets through a narrow and sharp-bended track layout.



AQUARIUM

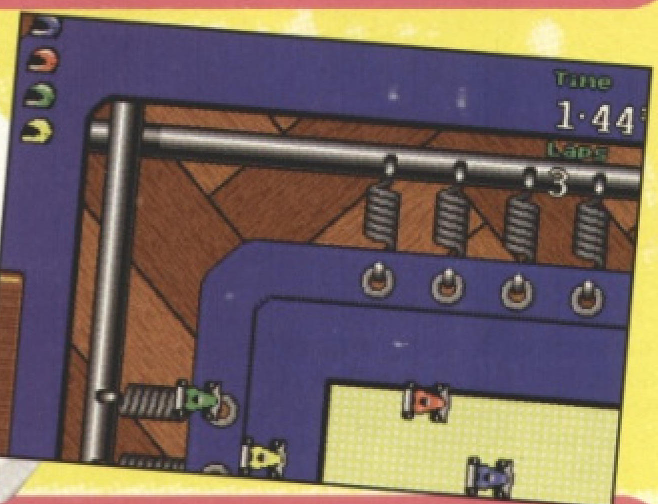
Still provisional, the aquarium would be the first time that submarines come into play. This is intended as an extremely tricky environment to master.





LAPS OF HONOUR

The tally of courses in Micro Machines '96 comes to a mind-boggling 65. That's another third on to top of Micro Machines 2, and three times the number in the original. 40 of these are in all-new 'environments'. By environments, Codemasters mean the distinct background graphics and racing conditions — a gymnasium, for example. There are three or more tracks for each environment. The balance of 25 or so tracks are made from environments of the previous game. Richard Eddy, of Codemasters explained how many gamers may have missed the environments found later in Micro Machines 2, because it became too hard. So they decided to reprise a few for this game, but with all-new tracks on them.





SECRET GARDEN

To many, Micro Machines 2 was a cheats' charter. It was all too tempting to push a fellow player to their doom, cut corners or cut people up like salami. More of it, we say! And Supersonic are obliging with cunning features that Dick Dastardly would be proud of (perhaps he's a consultant on the project). Codemasters' regular Penelope Pitstop — Rich Eddy — listed new features like; secret warps to future levels; speed boosts (a much-needed feature); short cuts to give you the edge and an intriguing, but undemonstrated feature that reverses the track layout.





CIRCUIT TRAINING

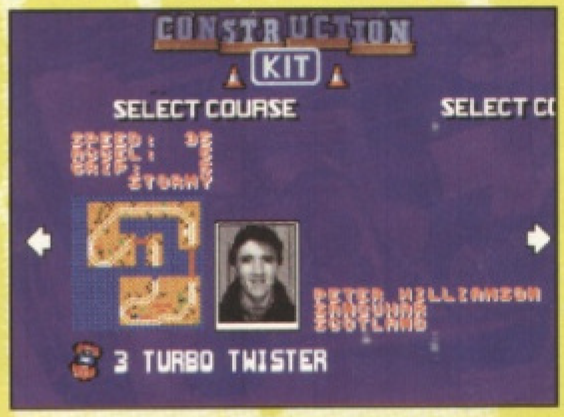
The feature to get most excited over, and one which should ensure the game's success, is the Construction Kit. Basically, this allows you to make your own tracks, save them to the battery back-up and play them whenever you want. A similar feature appeared on the PC version, but we are assured that the Megadrive interpretation will be far superior. To handle your own constructions, Codemasters are making the battery RAM (the save location) twice as big as in most other games, making space for ten tracks. If that is not enough, you can convert your track information into a long password string, offering infinite saved courses. And the process should be quite simple. Icon and menu controls mean that 15 minutes should be enough to make a good course. But what can you do within the Construction Kit? There is a surprising amount of freedom:

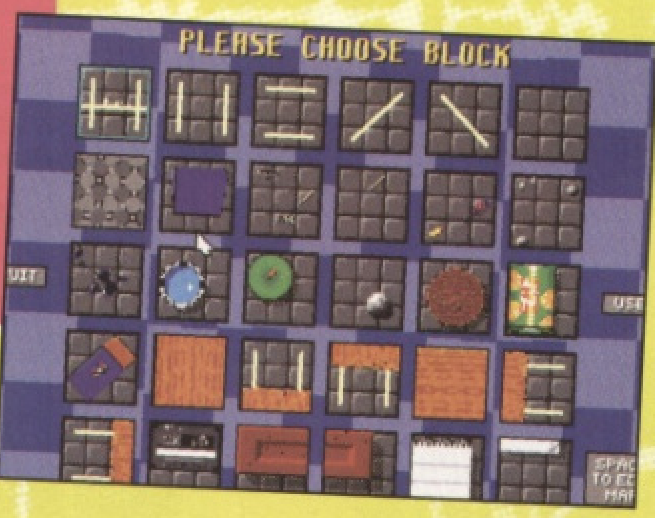
CREATE CAR

This allows you to totally redefine your vehicle. With a graphics palette you can even redraw it. All sorts of speed, handling and acceleration attributes may be tinkered with.









ADD INTERACTIONS

These are the hazards like whirlwinds and fires that add elements of danger to your track. Place as many of these wherever you want.

CHANGE CONDITIONS

New weather conditions have been added, with icy, stormy and windy to choose from, plus lightning effects. The kit lets you toggle between any of these.





ADD OBJECTS

Make your course as difficult or easy as you like by adding obstructions and barriers.



CHANGE LAYOUT

You can take any environment and rearrange the route. You can even contrast different foreground graphics with accompanying parallax backgrounds.




I'VE GOT THINGS SORTED.


Sensitive
OXY
DAILY
FACE WASH
OXY
DAILY
FACE WASH

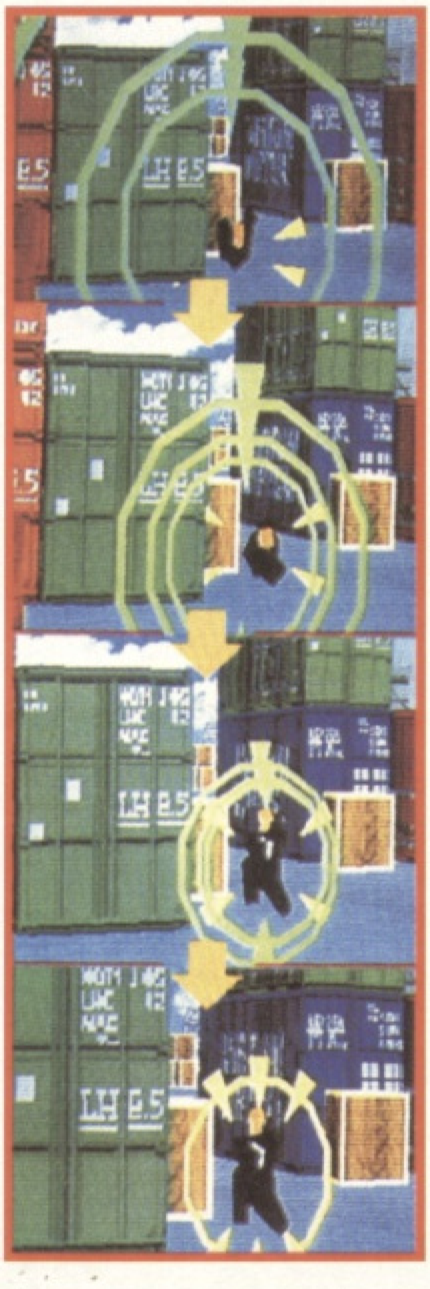
PREVIEWS

VIRTUA COP

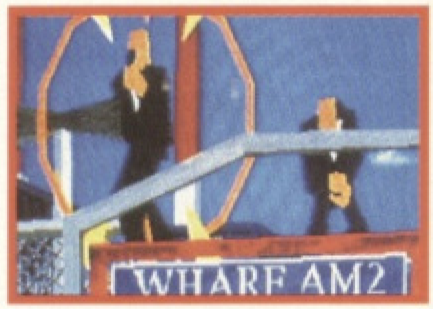
BY	VIRTUA COP
GAME TYPE	SHOOTING
PLAYERS	1-2
PRICE	TBA
RELEASE	TBA
COMPLETE	2/10

VIRTUA OVERLOAD!

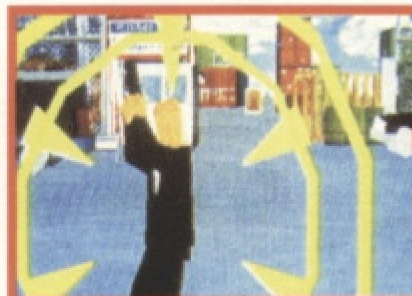
Over the next six pages you'll see the efforts of various teams trying to bring the arcade triumphs of Sega's AM2 team, to life on home formats. AM2 do Virtua Cop; Time Warner bravely tackle the veteran Virtua Racing; whilst Sega show off Virtua Fighter on 32X. Be careful — it may all be too much to take in a single sitting.



Pulling surprises out of the hat has become more or less routine for AM2, Sega's jewel in the crown R&D department. At the recent E3 show in Los Angeles, where their Saturn Virtua Cop conversion took pride of place. The coin-op, a polygon reworking of the shooting gallery genre, was their own creation.
V Cop is about a quarter complete, and AM2 are keen to show the work they have done. Not only is V Cop on trial, the game is a judgment on the Saturn itself, as this will be the first project to utilise the new Operating System, or OS, which we first mentioned in the Virtua Fighter 2 WIP last month. OS basically offers a lot more processing power, by simplifying the over-complex programming processes of the Saturn.
The visuals may look basic here, but they fail to convey the incredibly smooth movement, which has already been achieved. With a frame rate of 60 frames per second, the Saturn will be able to replicate the same panning, zooming and scrolling of the coin-op. The detail of faces, background textures and gory effects comes later. The game uses the sets, villains and bystanders of your typical Scorsese/ Coppola movie. Basically it's the Godfather without the pasta or wedding scenes.
Also anticipated is a light-gun to recreate the arcade experience perfectly. Previous light-guns for 16bit machines have been disappointments, but with AM2 designing their own guns for their own game, we have high hopes. Gun and game should be out for Xmas!



This sequence shows the difference ebtween Saturn and coin-op. Or so Oz says...



Plenty of time to get him.



The red circle means little time left to shoot.

Textures from level 1.



RTUA COP



Someone has to die...

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

A distinctive feature of Virtua Cop is the lock-on sight. When enemies are about to fire, a circular target marks them out, and two bars rotate around the edge towards top and bottom. When they meet, the target fires and you sustain a hit. The system is there to give you an idea of what targets are more deadly. It may seem to oversimplify the gameplay, but AM2 point out that it rids the game of any confusion over where the enemy is shooting from. Besides, you can hit foes even before they are auto-targetted.





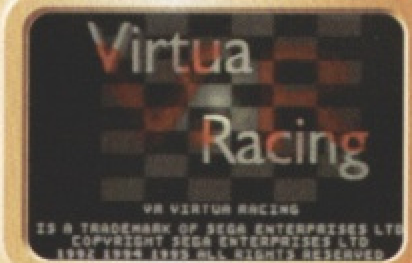
Sequential shots showing the relentless onslaught of Jimmy Cagney wannabees.





VIRTUA RODENT

Intriguingly, AM2 are also preparing to make the game mouse-compatible. It's the first game to openly embrace the Sega mouse, and the team hope to add a new feel to the game when playing with the peripheral.



BY: TIME WARNER

GAME TYPE: RACING

PLAYERS: 1-2

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: SEPTEMBER

COMPLETE

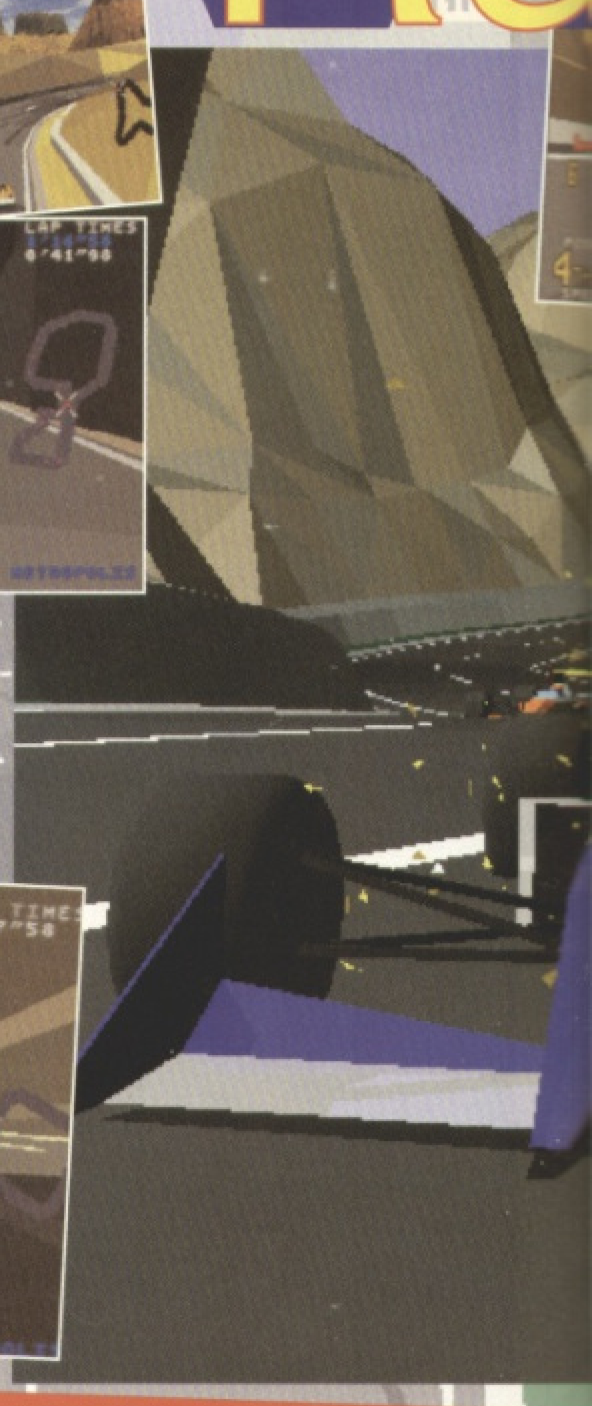
VIRTUA OVERLOAD!

Virtua Racing

Pee'd off because Daytona's clipping is worse than if Stevie Wonder became a hairdresser? Feel the need to supplement your Saturn's driving game selection with another coin-op conversion? If so, then here come Time Warner, pulling up to the kerb in their retuned version of Sega's coin-op fave, Virtua Racing. Following Sega's virtually arcade-perfect Megadrive and 32X versions, Time Warner's game takes the basic arcade game and adds extra cars, tracks and game modes to the chassis — the game equivalent to Halfords accessories.

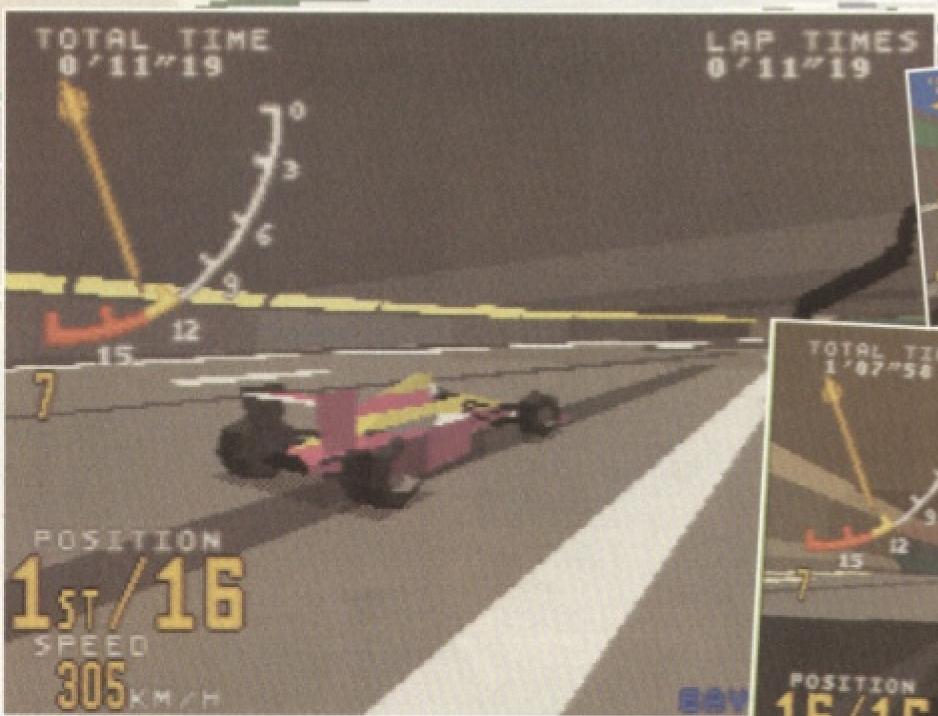
Saturn Virtua Racing features the expected arcade and practice modes, and these are supplemented by a Grand Prix option where 15 teams compete across the game's ten tracks, with the player upgrading their vehicle as the season progresses. Other delights still to be included are a split-screen two-player mode and a perfect copy of the arcade game's music, but how VR shapes up against Daytona and its light-sourced racing will be revealed when the game is released on to the Saturn starting grid in September.



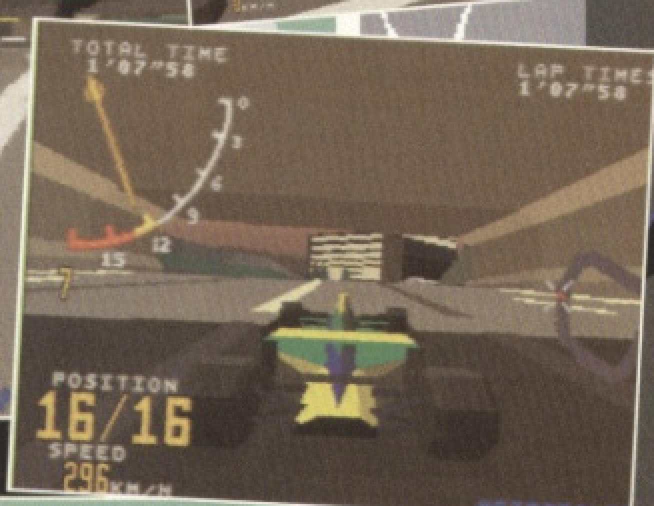








What is that shade of pruple called? Damned if I know.



TRACKS OF MY TEARS

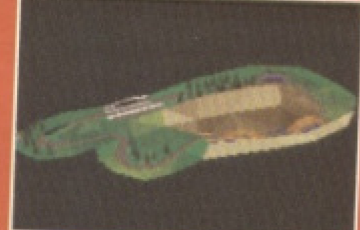
Time Warner have taken the opportunity to add extra tracks to the arcade game's three, with Virtua Racers now taken all around the world in their quest for polygon excellence.



AMAZON FALLS
Difficulty: Easy
Notes: A big hoop, basically.



SPEEDWAY
Difficulty: Easy
Notes: A rounded triangle.



BIG FOREST
Difficulty: Easy
Notes: Gentle corners for the Metro owners amongst you.



BAY BRIDGE
Difficulty: Medium
Notes: Very few straights, easy enough corners.



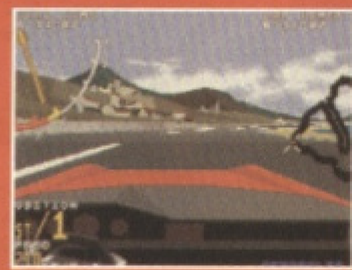
ONE CAREFUL OWNER

Just as Time Warner bumped up the number of tracks, they also bunged a couple of extra motahs into the deal. Each boasts differing handling and speed, with the go-kart only recommended to complete spanners who hate fast things.



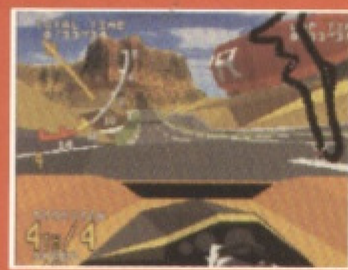
F1

Yer normal racing ve-hick-le — as seen in the coin-op. Good all-rounder.



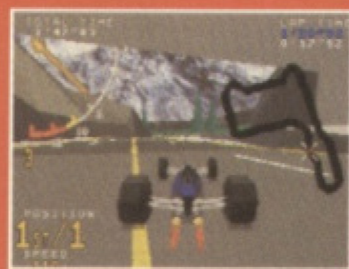
RED CAPRI

It's not a Capri, it looks more like an Allegro. Heavy so good at cornering but takes a while to get up to full pelt.



FLASH YELLOW MOTAH

These used to be popular in the 70s when Durex would put adverts all over them. As such, the newly-named 'Johnny' car is another good all-rounder. And bounces (not really).



DRAGSTER

The dragster's light weight means it doesn't corner too well, but by jove it's fast.



GO-KART

Ah c'mon. You can have a really smart F1 racer or a dragster, why bother with a bleedin' go-kart. A good laugh, but the driver's fingers have been welded together.



What, and I'm expected to caption this am I? A car.

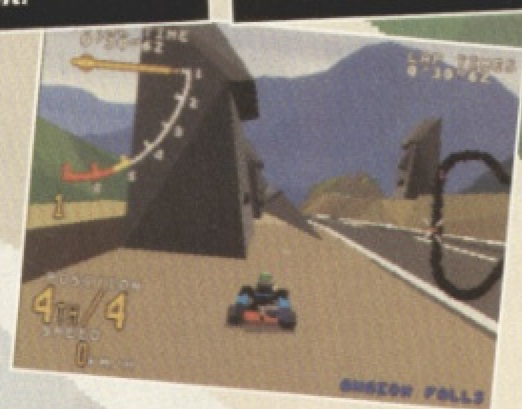


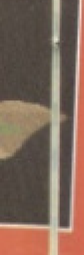
This week's prizes on 'Brucey's Play Your Cards Right.'



Is that Daytona, USA, over there?









ALPINE
Difficulty: Medium
Notes: A nasty L-shaped offering.



ACROPOLIS
Difficulty: Hard
Notes: An evil hairpin bend awaits.



DIABLO CANYON
Difficulty: Hard
Notes: Sharp, raised bends and walls to bounce off.



METROPOLIS
Difficulty: Hard
Notes: Narrow, overtaking tricky



PACIFIC COAST
Difficulty: Expert
Notes: Nasty V-shaped bend

Virtua Fighter 32X

BY	SEGA
GAME TYPE	BEAT 'EM UP
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	1-2
MEG	32

COMPLETE 6/10

VIRTUA OVERLOAD!

The E3 show in Los Angeles proved that there's a bounteous supply of top software coming for Sega's next generation gaming system... the Saturn, that is. The 'other' next gen system, 32X, fared slightly less well, with only a smattering of new releases planned for the 'magic mushroom' upgrade.

One of the most promising, though, is the long awaited 32X conversion of Virtua Fighter, which is still in the throes of development as we speak. As you can imagine, the game looks significantly different to the original £4,000 arcade machine. There have been a number of compromises in the look of the game — the ring now looks a lot more basic and the number of polygons used to make up the eponymous Virtua Fighters has been slashed significantly to keep the speed up.

Well, that's the bad news out of the way, because although there has been a great reduction in the on-screen detail, the game moves really smoothly and all of the animation from the Model One arcade machine has made its way into the 32X conversion. All the characters are present, and every one of their moves, throws, combos and counter-attacks has been programmed into this gargantuan 32MEG cartridge. In fact, to make sure, we unearthed our Japanese VF fighting guide and tried every technique known and indeed, we weren't disappointed.

The game is still at a very early stage of development. Although all the moves are in, it's impossible to actually hit your opponent. Also, the code used to change the different camera angles is very early, with only a few different perspectives in there at the moment. However, even at this early stage, it's fair to say that Virtua Fighter 32X could well be the best cart mushroom owners have seen on their system for ages. If the programmers can retain all of the coin-op's gameplay (which is a tall order, but totally achievable within the confines of a 32MEG cart), Virtua Fighter could well end up in a something of a must-buy scenario.



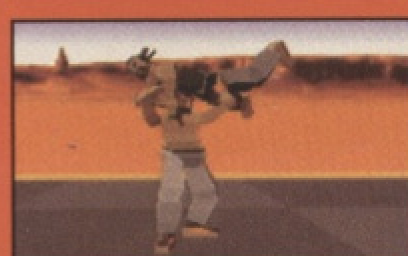


E-MOTION

Motion capture. That's what it's all about these days. What is basically involves is using powerful computers to track the movements of human beings as they perform various manoeuvres, such as punches, kicks and flaming dragon punches (except the last one). Although Flashback used a primitive version of motion capture, it was Virtua Fighter which was the first coin-op to bring the technique to players in full 3D — the benefits being uncanny realism in the fighting genre.

The motion capture remains super-impressive, even in the 32X game which features far less detail than the arcade and Saturn versions. If you think that this looks good, you ought to look out for the forthcoming Saturn conversion of Virtua Fighter 2 — it features even more realistic gameplay and smoother action. Smart.







Virtua Fighter 32X



Hello, I'm a poor video grab, I'm afraid...



'You've got a fly on your nose. Let me get it...'





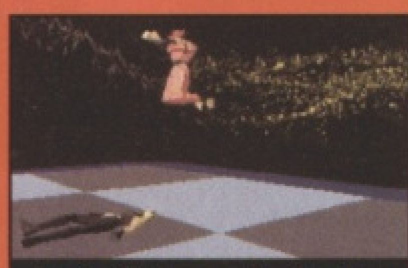


EXTRA! EXTRA!

Ok, so VF32X doesn't look half as good as the Sega Saturn version. Granted. To help make up for the compromises in detail, Sega's 32X coders are busy adding extra bits to the game that didn't end up in the outstanding Saturn conversion.

Multi-player aficionados should be well 'sorted' by the addition of a range off tournament options along the lines of SF2 or Eternal Champions. Another special feature which sounds rather intriguing is the inclusion of a button which enables the player to select the fighting perspective. Excellent stuff.

None of this has been coded yet, but it's in the design document, so it should be in the game.



Looks like an episode of 'Larry The Lamb' to me.



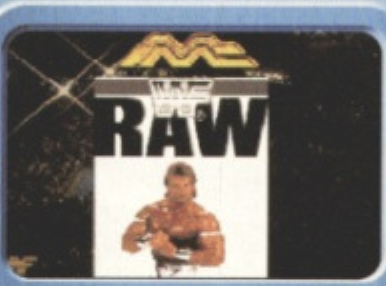
'Don't call me Square Legs...'











BY: ACCLAIM

GAME TYPE: BEAT 'EM UP

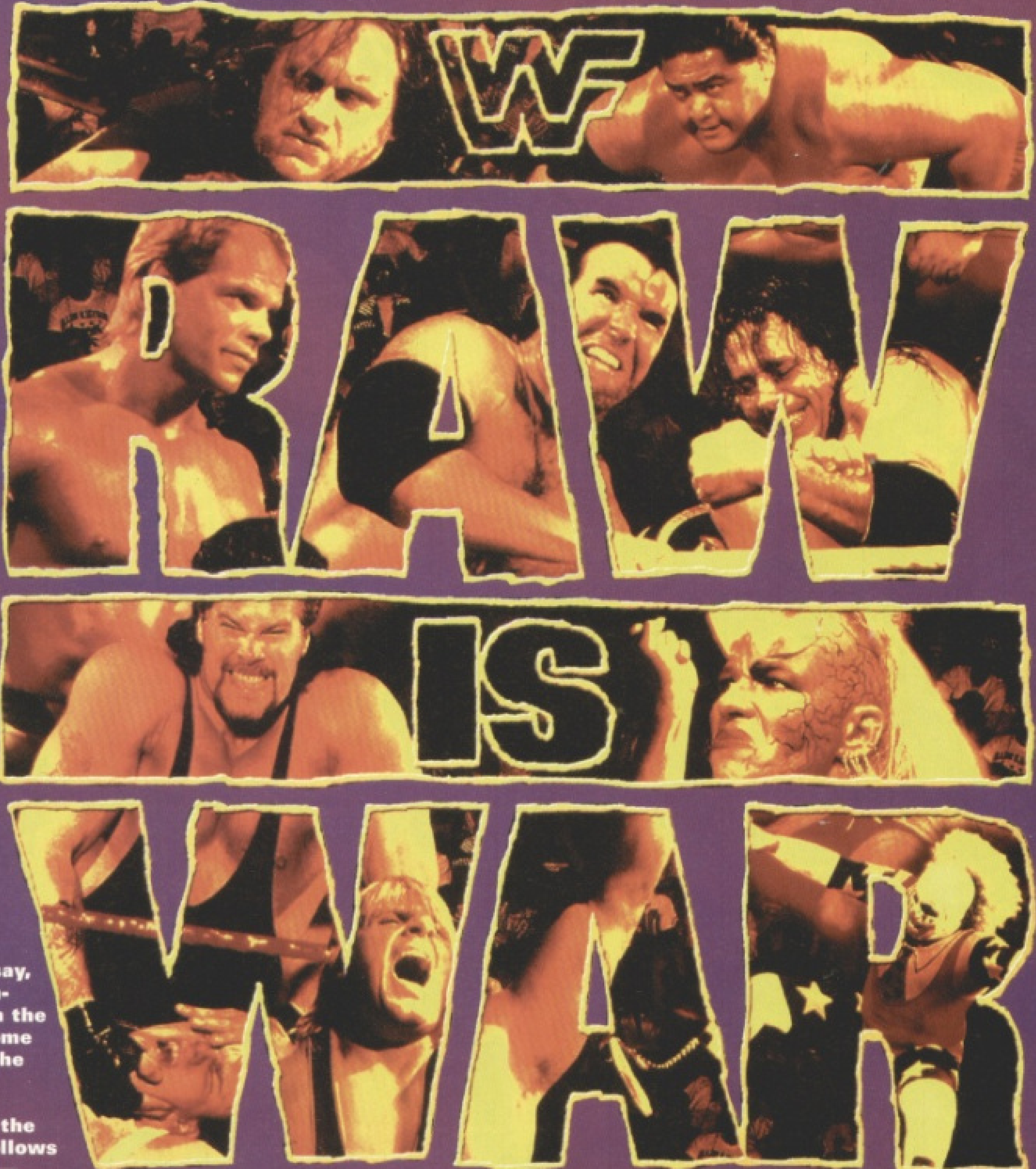
RELEASE: JUNE

PRICE: TBA

1-4 PLAYERS

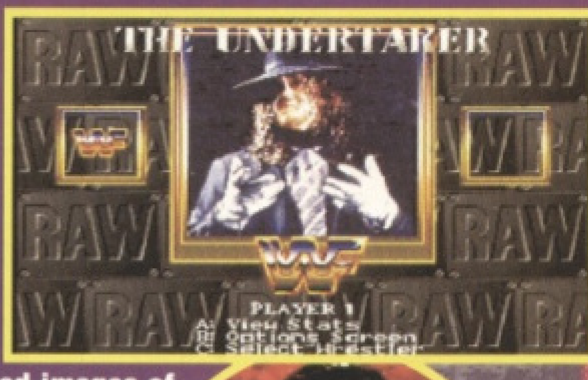
24 MEG

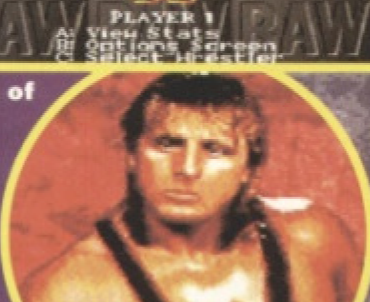
COMPLETE

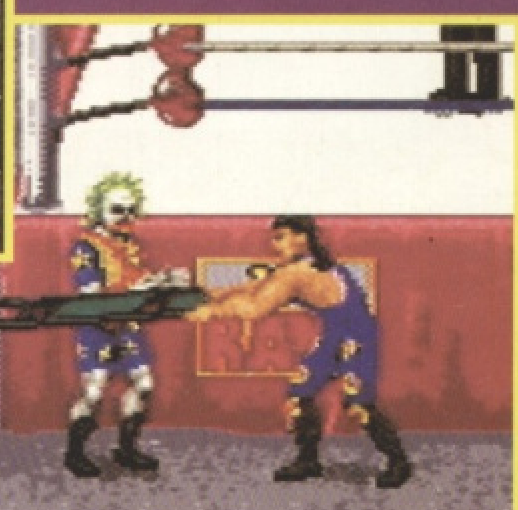


Raw is war! Or so they say, and following the lycra-clad warrior outings on the Megadrive, this gruesome troupe are loading on the MEG to star in a heavy weight wrestling contender on the 32X. Featuring the original gang from the 16bit version, Raw on the 32X follows essentially the same plot thread — namely pummelling the heck out of each other in either One-on-One, Tag Team, or all out carnage Bedlam and Rumble modes. But building on the popular success of its previous incarnations, the Raw programmers have enhanced the title in accordance to the 32X's graphical improvements on the Megadrive. First up, the experience has been given a fresh lick of paint to renovate the intro and presentation screens — displaying far superior digitised images of the infamous wrestlers. But far more importantly, the in-game characters have grown from mere sprites to giants towering around the ring in their tried and tested fashion.

On top of this more moves have been included for the characters, and for the WWF aficionados, there are new objects to bung at each other in a spot of extra-ring illegality (watch out for the life threatening first aid kit!). But for now feast your eyes on the pics, and look out for the review in a forthcoming issue.







Binky the deckchair attendant and a very difficult customer.

Oi, you reading this caption, your Dad wears a skirt...

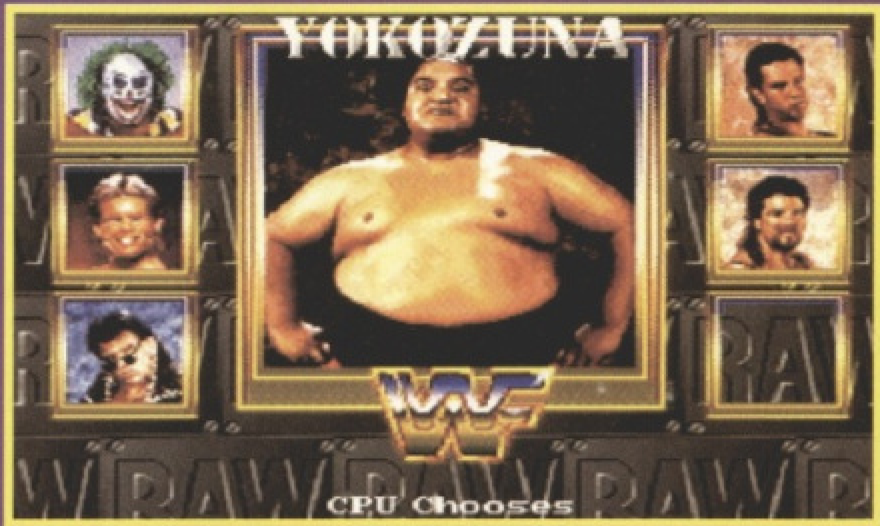


IT'S SO SPESH-EEAL

As any WWF console veteran will know, the unlikely lads and lass who make Monday nights happen, all have special moves that put their human counterparts to shame. A cunning combo of DPad movements and button presses combined with a keen sense of timing can produce a gravity defying flurry of fists as in the case of top looker Luna Vachon and her spinning move. One small point though, these moves aren't published in any manual and require practise — or should we say trial and error!



Or will you go for contestant number 3, Keith, a real romeo?



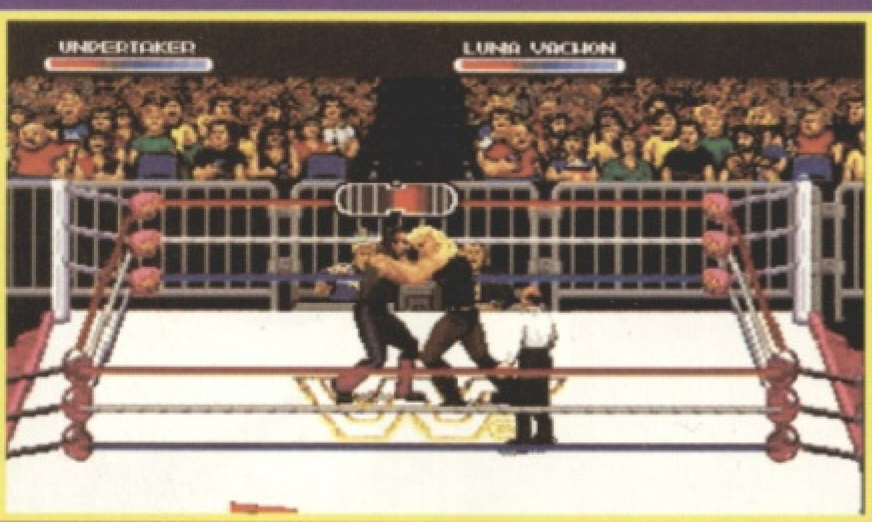
Mean Machines Sega is sorry to announce that that is your Mum.



Look, even the crowd are alrger. Coo, the 32X, eh?



Paul Bufton's elementary chat-up technique in action.









BY	SEGA
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM
PRICE	TBA
RELEASE	JUNE(US)
PLAYERS	1-2
COMPLETE	



Paul and Gus were having one of those silly conversations over at Sega this month (as you do when you're waiting for the Hippo Pizza to arrive). Our good friend Mark at Sega was pointing out that in America sports games are the giant sellers. Our yank pals cannot get enough of Baseball, football and hockey games. In the other great territory, Japan, the RPGs do all the serious running. Companies like Squaresoft (creators of huge Nintendo RPGs) are regarded as demi-gods. And what, we got to thinking, what is the Brits equivalent of a sweet tooth? Put simply, it has to be platformers.

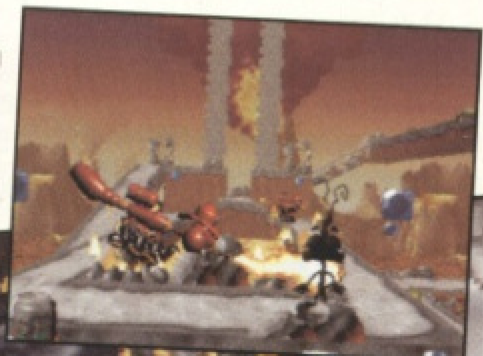
Discounting a few games like Donkey Kong, we invented the platformer. That is the big, sprawling, adventure-elemented platformer. And it was Sonic, more than anything that created the big game explosion in the country. All this analysis serves a purpose, because it's the platformer that will make the Saturn in this country. And, after a couple of false starts, Sega look like they may have the platformer to start the bandwagon. It's Bug.

Bug is the work of the Sega Away Team. That is a select group set up some two years ago before the Saturn, to prepare games to blow away the competition. Bug, one of their creations is a deceptive little creature. While Clockwork Knight and Astal have attempted to cloak their gameplay weaknesses with sumptuous graphics and effects, Bug is sharp, uncluttered, even simplistic in the visual department. Much more importantly, it's a huge, gameplay-intensive game, with an extra dimension, literally.

Bug is the first true three-dimensional platform game. Each of the two dozen stages is a labyrinth of walkways, lifts, waterfalls and cliffs. By using scaling in an original way, Bug is able to move in and out of the screen as easily as he moves across it. So may the many insectoid foes he faces, including bees, grasshoppers, fire ants and dung beetles (complete with poo). Not only that, but the perspective is used more subtly to zoom in and out of the action. If Bug is scaling a high cliff, more of the play area will be visible. But if the area he is in is crammed with baddies, the scale of the display will be smaller. All of this is controlled automatically, and the change is barely perceptible.

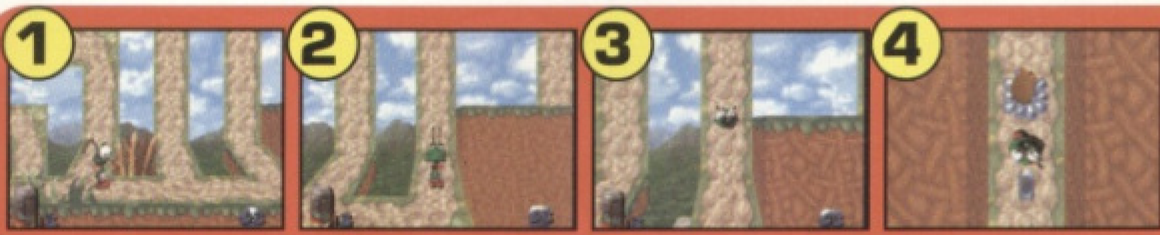
Smoothness and simplicity are not the only elements of this remarkable game. There's a puzzle and explorative element, with two separate bonus games, accessed by collecting gems or finding a hidden coin. Switches are used to open gates and operate lifts, and power-up globs add new powers like gobbing and zapping. The timing for Bug's infestation of the market is a little confused, though we understand that an American, and thus reviewable version may be in our possession for next month. Until then, enjoy these screenshots.











INTREPID BUG IN GIDDY LABYRINTH

This sequence shows the extent to which custom scaling can warp the perspective of conventional platform gaming. Bug moves in standard left/right fashion (1). Then he turns into the screen (2). Bug shows his ability to climb vertical passages, with an overhead perspective (3). The final shot, on the same passage shows a zoomed in perspective to deal with a tricky section (4).









Bug puts on that Mandy Jordache expression.

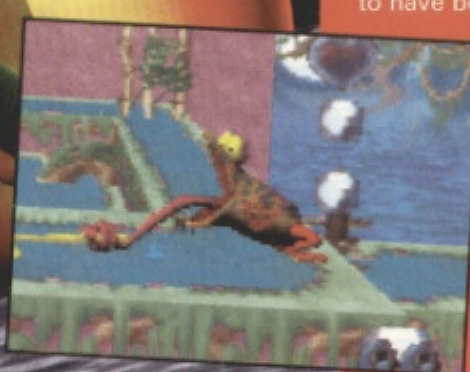


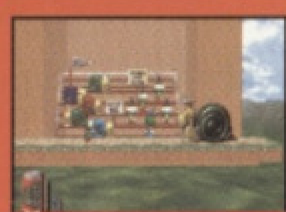




TOM BOSS-LY

Bug's bosses are wondrous incarnation of renders that seem to have been taken from models. All the boss scenes have been radically altered from earlier versions of the game. Now the action takes place in a flat playfield, but the boss encounters are consequently more playable.

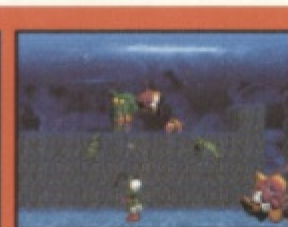




The snail boss with shell.



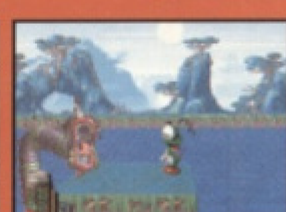
Not a happy bunny.



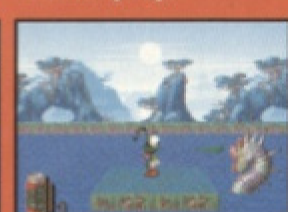
Octo tennis. You wanna play.



Taking big licks.



Nasty worm pt. 1



Nasty worm pt. 2

LAST G



BY: KAZE

GAME TYPE: PINBALL SIM

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: JUNE(IMPORT)

1-2 PLAYERS

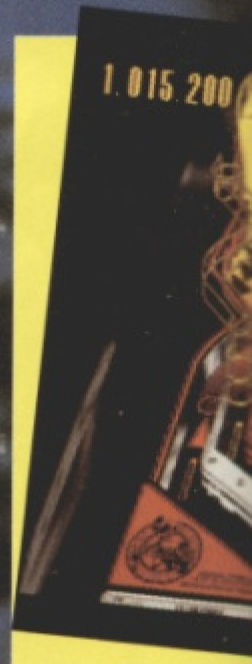
COMPLETE

Four for the price of one sounds like a bargain to any penny-wise console gamer. More to the point, four pinball tables on one Saturn CD is an offer not to be sniffed at. And that's exactly what they've done with Last Gladiators, the first pinball sim to appear on the 32bit wonder console.

In typical Japanese style the programmers have taken all of the best elements from standard pinball machines and added their own quirky speech FX and dot matrix animations. But in a break from the tradition of bit-mapped sims of yesteryear Last Gladiators captures all of the action in true photorealism, giving the tables the most realistic look of any sim to date.



For mega points, through religious minorities to the lions by lighting 'Christian Carnage'.









SIMPLY DOTTY

All the rage on real tables nowadays, dot matrix displays have replaced the old fashioned reels to offer animated sequences when a special feature is activated. In keeping with the realism of modern tables, Last Gladiators also flashes vast dot matrix emulations from in front of the play area accompanied by traditional pinball animations and blood curdling digitised speech and FX. On the sidelines, smaller displays jump around the game area indicating the how many more times a bonus has to be hit before it comes into play.



This table has all kinds of 'fight to the death' type bonuses. And a large plastic Colosseum! Roman fact: Nero fiddled while Rome burned!



Pinball reflects love (the socia Camelot fact:A

GLADIATORS



TABLE PLAN

For the true pinball afficionado a guide to every table is included on the disk. Every single bumper, ball-lock, and special feature is given an in-depth account accompanied by a run down on the best way to play the bonus features for those stratospheric high scores.

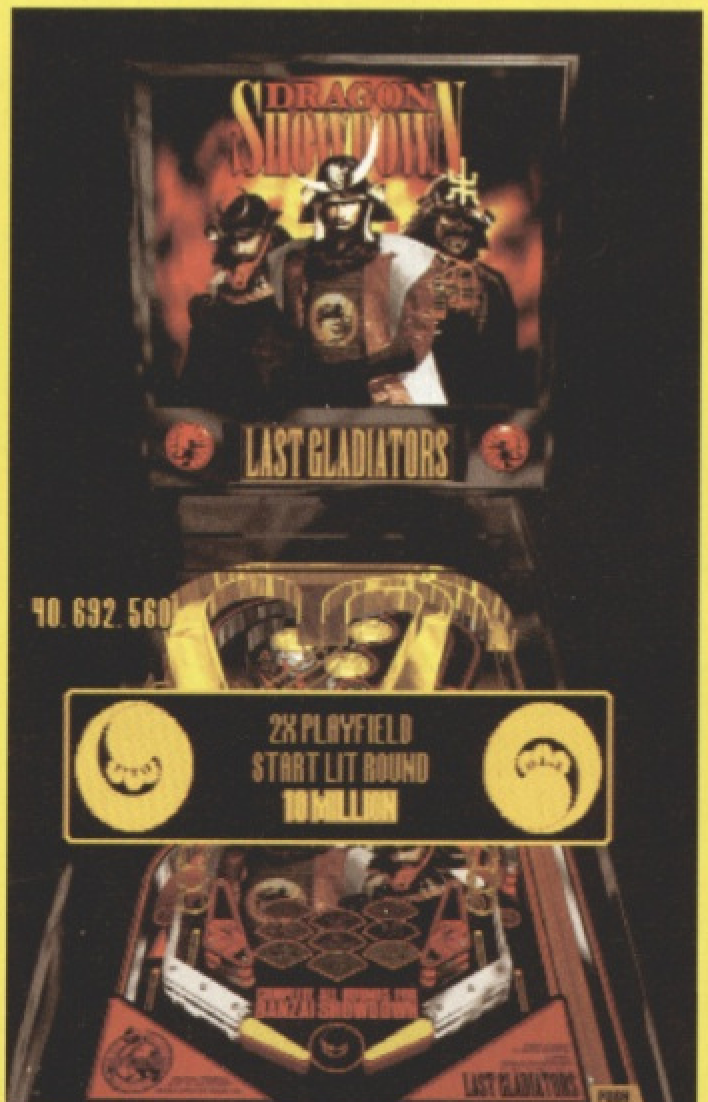


THREE PLAY

Before the player even releases the ball into the maze of bumpers and stroboscopic lights, they are given the option of selecting a bonus for the round. From a choice of a flipper guard to stop to the ball falling out of play, to a double score bonus for the round, to accelerated jet tube launch, the selected bonus can be vital to the activation of individual bonuses. Once the ball is lost, and a new one comes into play a new treat has to be selected.



...cts mediaeval chivalry and courtly ...cial convention, not the singer). ...t:Arthur is a king AND a catfood!



Oriental fighting character to this table = men in funny decorated firemen's hats. Dragon fact:A Banzai is in fact a big bike!



The black magic/evil goings on table with the infamous 'bloody jets' bonus. Arcane fact:Warlock is a crappy to-video movie.

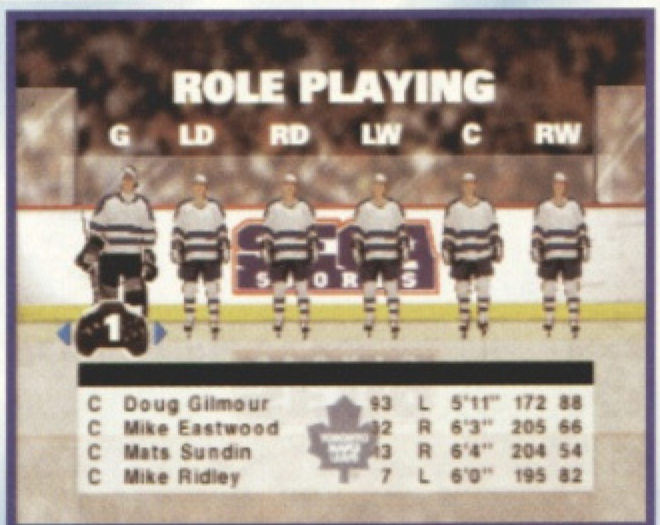
NHL HOCKEY

BY	SEGA
GAME TYPE	SPORTS
PRICE	TBA
RELEASE	TBA
PLAYERS	1-2
COMPLETE	6

Sports are going to have a huge significance on the Saturn, especially now the US machine is out, because our partners across the Atlantic cannot get enough of the stuff. With the rash of titles slated, will come all sorts of new approaches to depicting the action. Sega are at the forefront with their first ice-hockey game in yonks, provisionally titled 'Saturn NHL Hockey'.

Ok, game detectives, you may have worked out that the game is in 3D. With principles not entirely unrelated to Sega's International Victory Goal, NHL Hockey shows the action from a variety of camera angles, all of which show the rink in 3D, with accompanying crowd. It must be said that NHL looks set to handle this with considerably more finesse than the much-slagged Victory Goal, first by having many more viewing options, and secondly with an enhanced replay mode. The action replay shows a sizeable chunk of recent action, with power for the player to frame advance, slow-motion and change the viewing angles. There's also some nice presentation effects, including zooms for penalties, and a disorientating spin around the centre as a prelude to each face-off.

If the game is set to impress visually, it should stagger in terms of interaction. There will be the chance for up to 12 players to participate simultaneously — two complete teams. If you can round up two multi-taps and the requisite number of pads. Oh yeah, some mates might help as well. Also, it's nice to see some proper presentation, decent leagues and authentic team profiles. The front-end has some nice touches, including stylish 'video wall' backdrops and a bit where the team stand shivering on the ice, waiting to be picked. Brings back all those games period memories. Some time in the autumn is the best guess for this comprehensive sim.



B—O... B—O—Y—S... We're the boys to entertain you-oooo!





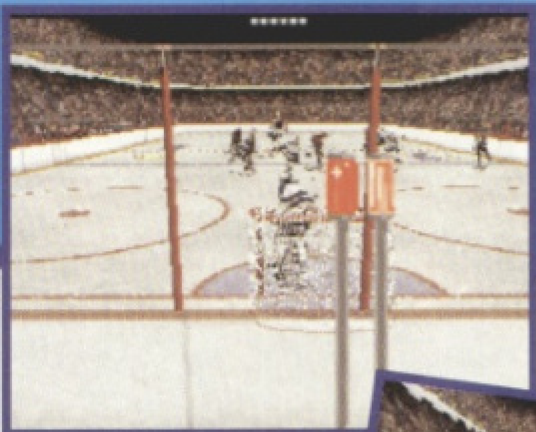


ALL THE GREATS

One small feature showing the game's attention to detail are profiles of all the game's players. Ok, so stats are normally the bane of anyone other than train-spotters, but these have digitised pictures, as well as a flip-side 'card' picture, like the popular baseball cards collected in the US.

ROVING REPORTER

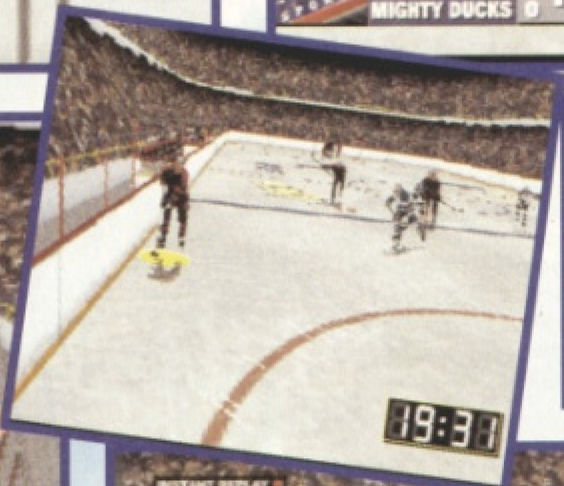
Back to those viewing angles. There's a dozen or so of them, including high aerial views, behind goal and those from a spectator position, including sight of the glass partition around the rink. The players are sprite, rather than polygon-based, but show a high degree of detail. From a distance, the whole affair looks quite realistic. Speed and gameplay are not being sacrificed for effect, though, as the game is currently playing faster than anything like EA's Hockey games or Wayne Gretzky on Megadrive.













All of a sudden, a shop-keeper appeared...



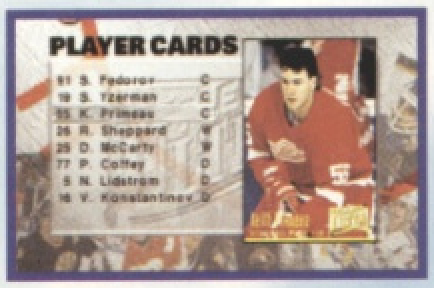
Christopher Dean used to be a policeman, you know. Figures.



I reckon Jayne Torville should wear one of those ice hockey masks. Ugly cow.



Cylinders 5 (Top Trumps gag).







I went skating once. I fell on my arse, got wet, and looked like I'd pee'd meself.

COMIX ZONE



BY: SEGA

GAME TYPE: BEAT 'EM UP

RELEASE: AUGUST

PRICE: TBA

1 PLAYERS

16 MEG

COMPLETE

Some months ago, MEAN MACHINES printed the first pics of a stunning new variation on the beat 'em up theme: Comix Zone. The game is just about complete, and the programmers look as if they haven't fumbled between the idea and the implementation, which seems superb.

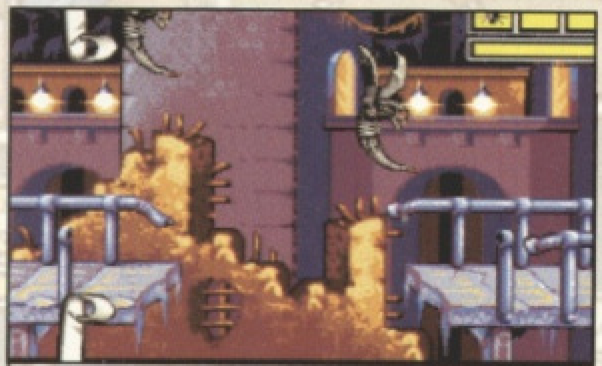
Comix Zone features an artist hero character, plunged into the world of his two-dimensional creations, whilst one of his demonic drawings, Sketch has escaped from his paper prison. Your hero has to be one of the coolest and most current Sega stars ever, with his pony-tail, grunge clothing and taste in 'sounds'. The game also has a subtle sense of humour with a "Game over man, game over!" quote and similar.

The idea of being in a comic is conveyed by turning the playfield into a page separated into the frames of a storyboard. After beating the baddies in each frame, options to move to other frames open up. Choices make the game non-linear. The gameplay is pretty simple and accessible, with easy combat moves. However, the range of enemies is massive and backgrounds can be used to improvise new moves — hanging from pipes and kicking is one example.

The presentation is stunning, with frames 'coming to life' with background animation when you move into them, the hand of the diabolical sketch scribbling new enemies before your eyes, and a shapely woman friend who flashes up on screen with snippets of story and words of encouragement. Of course, being a comic, there is a plot gradually revealed by the speech bubbles coming from the characters, good and bad.

Originality is an over-used term, and a under-found commodity, but Comix Zone has to be the most original game interpretation of the year.

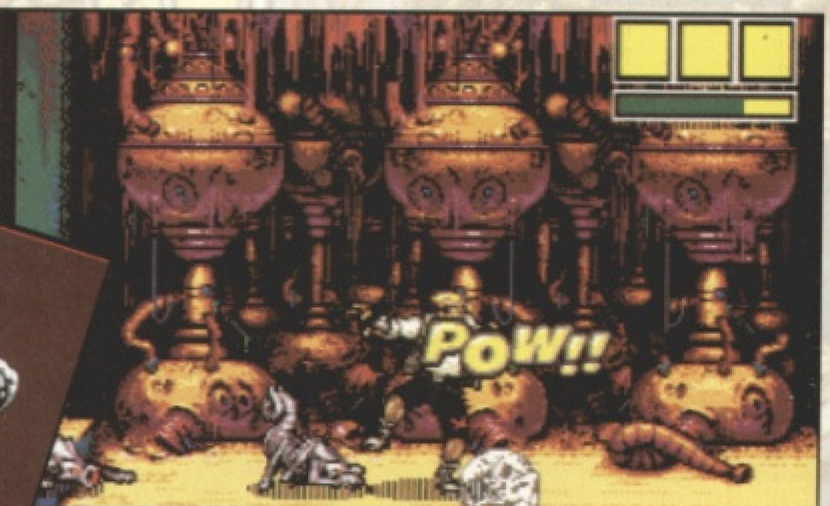
MEAN MACHINES recommends you watch for the review like a hawk.

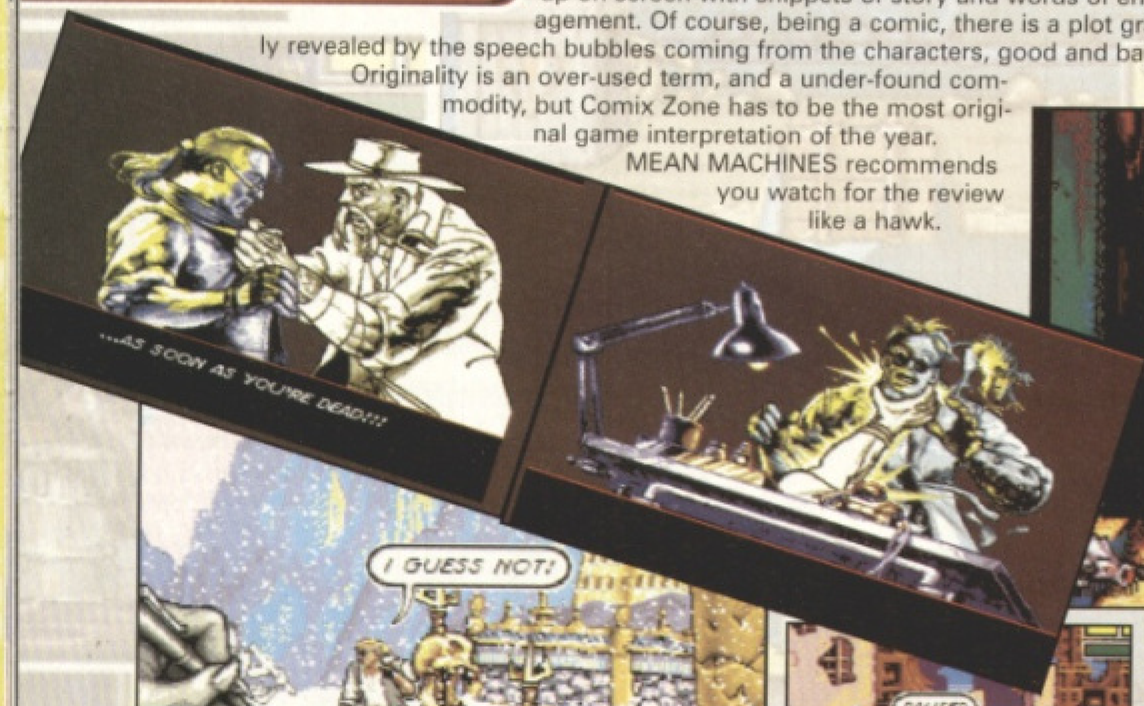


Comix Zone's outlet of The Gap.

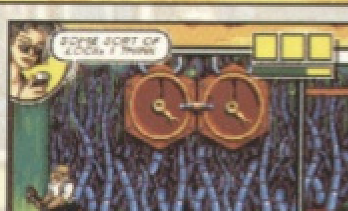


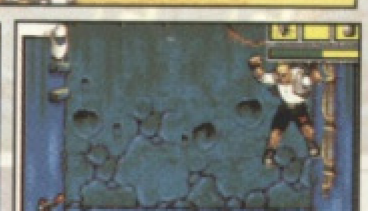
Just as your artist fellow turns into a muscle bound mega hero.

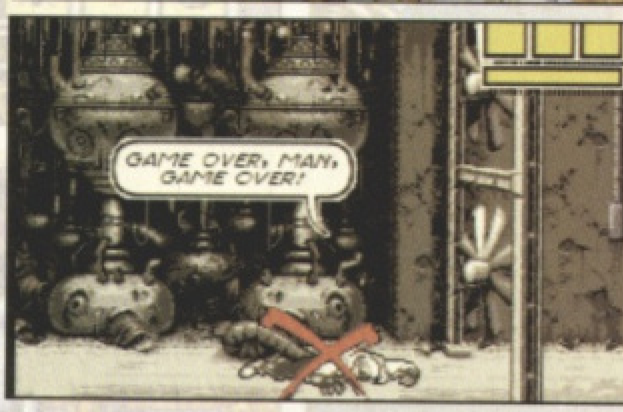














PAUL'S TIPS

The summer hols are closing in fast. Just think of those long days with nothing better to do than tuck into some tasty tipping morsels. So on this month's menu we have prepared a delicious selection of small tippets for all tastes, only to be followed by a hefty portion of top player guiding action in the Fever Pitch arena.



And with all this extra time on your hands you're obviously going to be ripping the summertime releases to pieces in double quick time. So don't forget to send only the grooviest stuff to qualify for a cart winning situation to: I WAS RIGHT ABOUT THAT SADDLE, PAUL'S TIPS, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1 3AU.

MEGADRIVE

NBA JAM TE

INFINITE TURBO

Need an added boost to your footwork on the court? Kevin Elliott from Belfast might just have the answer with a cheat to give your players infinite turbos so that when you hit the turbo button the meter never runs dry. On the 'Tonight's Match-Up' screen press A 13 times and then simply hold down A, B, and C. Thanks Kevin.



It's NBA Jam, begorrah! (Best I could come up with).



SATURN

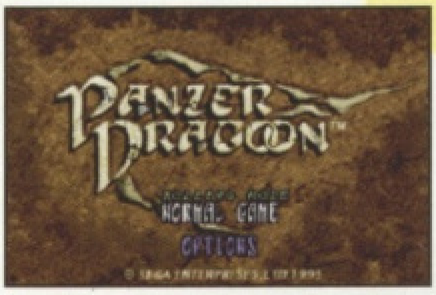
LEVEL SELECT, WIZARD MODE, ROLLING, AND PLAY AS JUST RIDER OR DRAGOON!

Undoubtedly one of the best games set for the first wave of the Saturn launch software, Panzer Dragoon blew everybody in the office away. So in readiness for the next generation of tipping I've managed to get my hands on some superb cheats to really get the adrenalin thumping.

PANZER DRAGOON

BARREL ROLLING MODE

Another code for the Difficulty screen that allows you to perform the most outrageous barrel rolls. Simply input UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, and UP for the words Rolling Mode to appear, and hit the DOWN diagonal while controlling the



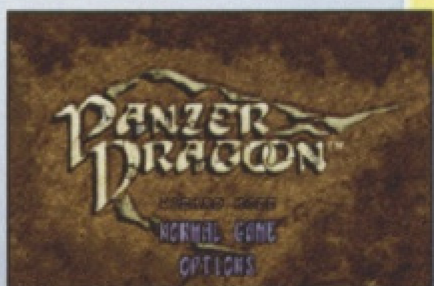


PLAY WITHOUT RIDER

Bizarrely enough you can control the dragon on its own by changing the language of your Saturn start-up screen to German (Deutsch) and inputting UP, X, RIGHT, X, DOWN, X, LEFT, X, UP, Y, and Z on the Difficulty screen.

WIZARD MODE

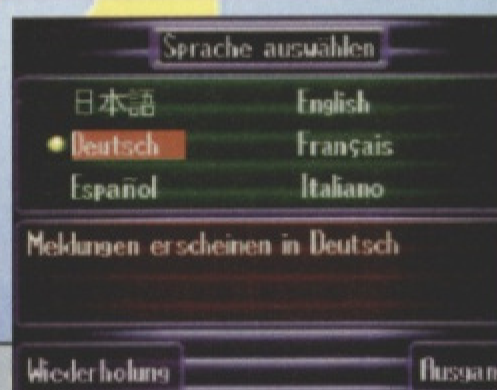
Here's one for those people who thought the game was a little bit too easy for comfort. To make the game extra fast and tricky, firstly complete the game on Hard and enter L, R, L, R, UP, DOWN, UP, LEFT, RIGHT on the Difficulty Select screen. The words Wizard Mode will appear and you're away!





PLAY WITHOUT DRAGOON

Even weirder than a dragon on its lonesome is the rider floating mid-air firing at on-coming baddies. To play this mode you have to finish the game on Easy, completing all four levels with 100% hit rate on each level. And once again go to the Difficulty screen and enter LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, UP, DOWN, UP, DOWN, L, and R.







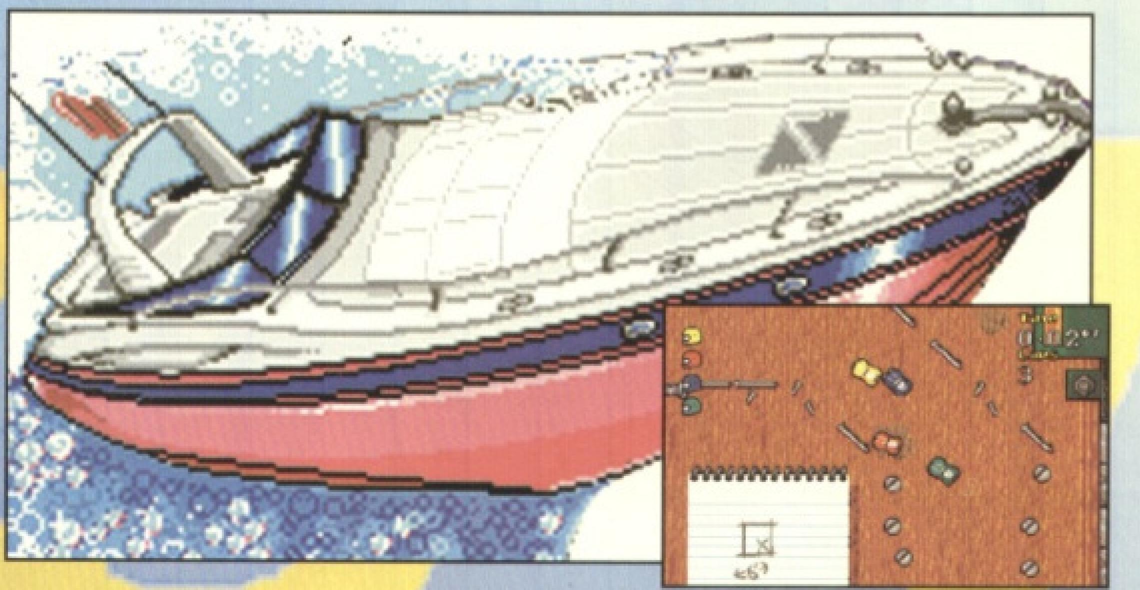
This guy could do with being mounted. Well, that's my opinion.

MEGADRIVE

The Original Micro Machines 2 Turbo Tournament

LEVEL WARP

Those miniature racers speed into the tips section again thanks to Mark Crowther from Derby. According to Mark, if you take up the Challenge mode on the Bricks 'n' Trees level, complete one lap and then move towards the middle of the screen for a handy level warp!



NBA LIVE '95

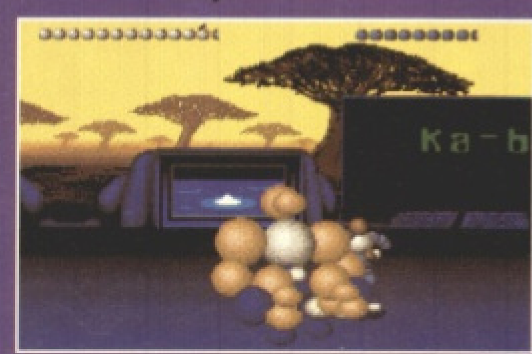
PRACTISE SHOOTING

Slam dunkers Thomas Tuza and David Kavanagh have discovered a small, but tidy, hint for all basketeers wanting to perfect their targeting skills. During any game hold A and press START and you will be whisked off for some practise shooting.

BALLZ

FINISH HIM

Lee Mountford from County Durham sent in a whole load of tips, unfortunately many had been previously printed. There is, however, this one tippette for Ballz that allows you to unleash a mighty blow and perform a bit of a snazzy trick. When your opponent's energy bar has almost expired, hit UP twice for a mighty blow, and then press the A button four times for the top trick.



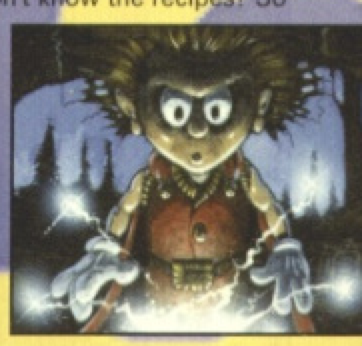


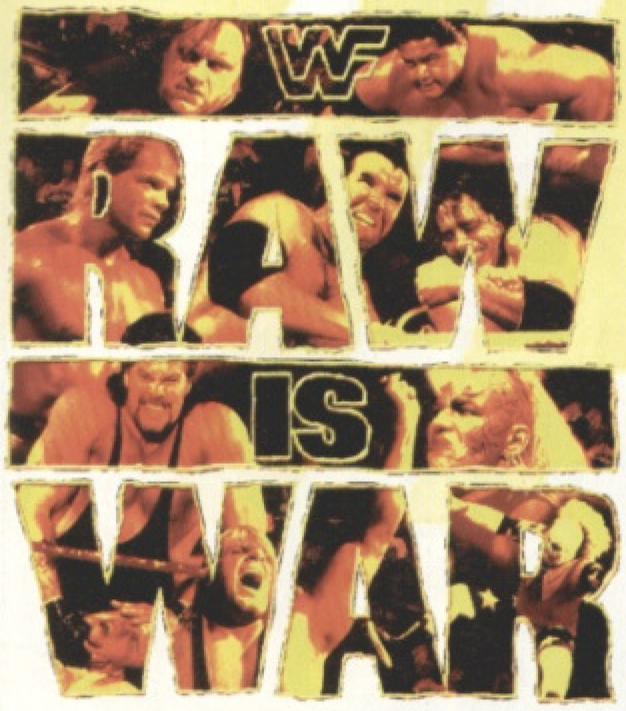
Flink

CHEAT MENU AND SPELL RECIPES

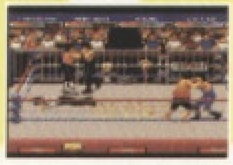
Bit of an old title now, Flink had the looks, but lost out in the speed department. Nevertheless, here's how to get to a tasty cheat menu beyond your wildest dreams. At any point in the game hold DOWN and press START. When the in-game menu appears, release DOWN, and press RIGHT, RIGHT, RIGHT, LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, and LEFT. The cheat menu will appear giving all the scrolls, spells, and 50 of all the keys and ingredients. But what use are the ingredients if you don't know the recipes? So here, as ever they are in full.

SPELL	COMBINATION
PLATFORM	FEATHER — EYE — FEATHER
SHIELD	DIAMOND RING — TEAR — GOLD RING
DEMON	GOLD RING — MIRROR — NECKLACE
SPIRIT BOMB	FEATHER — GOLD RING — LEAF
LIGHTNING	DIAMOND RING — FEATHER — DIAMOND RING
QUICK GROW	LEAF — FEATHER — SILVER RING
DUST DEVIL	LEAF — SILVER RING — FEATHER
SHRINK SPELL	MIRROR — NECKLACE — AMULET
GHOST	SKULL — TOOTH — ROOT





CHANGE CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES



Gavin Weir from Hinkley has kindly sent in a collection of tips to drool over for the ring slinging extravaganza better known to us as WWF Raw. To change the character attributes for Diesel, Owen Hart, Bam Bam Bigelow, and Yokozuna, simply go to the character select screen and press B to view the stats. Now at this point press the following buttons at the same time depending on which character you want to change:

DIESEL	DOWN, C, A, START
OWEN HART	UP, START, C, A
BAM BAM BIGELOW	C, START, A
YOKOZUNA	UP, C, A

POWERDRIVE

LEVEL CODES

Once again Dave Franck from Belgium comes, to the rescue. This month he's been working on nicely rendered Powerdrive from Rage. Cheers Dave.

ROUND	PASSWORD	VEHICLE
1	NO PASSWORD	MINI COOPER/ FIAT CINQUECENTO
2	ZVMK39N2T5GHXMGL	MINI COOPER
3	LHWBD3TSFKKG_6F2	MINI COOPER
4	03MK9ZXQNHF2ZZ6G	RENAULT CLIO WILLIAMS
5	4C4TF3280HKSHZM8	RENAULT CLIO WILLIAMS
6	GQC084ZCZKKB32KC	TOYOTA CELICA/ FORD ESCORT COSWORTH
7	4R4MD37WF09SFR6R	TOYOTA CELICA
8	6Y4ZHNVS_T9BWK8C	TOYOTA CELICA
9	BRC55D_P6CQTH81_	TOYOTA CELICA

GAME GEAR

Ristar

BONUS CODES



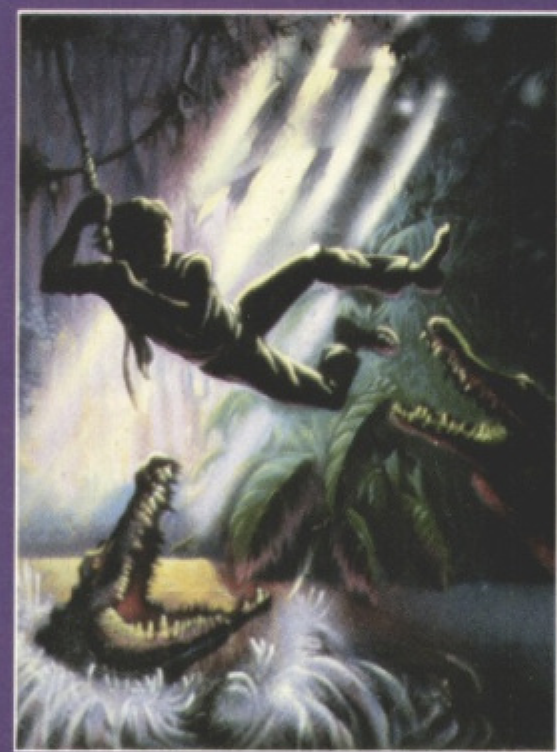
Is there something lacking from Ristar on your Game Gear? Why don't you try some added bonus codes on the Password screen? Thanks to Gareth Maxwell from York for the following.

STAR
VALDI
MUSEUM
ILOVEU
MAGURO
DOFEEL
CANDY
AAAAAA
XXXXXX

PITFALL: THE MAYAN ADVENTURE

LEVEL SELECT

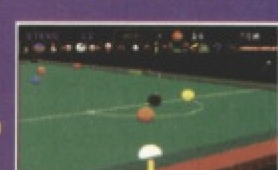
Even though we printed an extensive Player's Guide to Harry's adventures a couple of months ago, it's clear that several gamestrels are still having a hard time. So as ever — if in doubt, cheat! — and here is the level select thanks to Charlie Rain from Handsworth, Birmingham. On the title screen (after the logo has crashed down and the options have appeared) press B, RIGHT, A, DOWN, RIGHT, UP, B, LEFT, A, UP, RIGHT, and A. Now move the cursor back to the START option and push UP to reveal the different levels.



JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER

WATCH A PERFECT 147 BREAK

Remarkably this is the only cheat we've received for Jimmy's ace snooker sim. It's not so much a cheat, more a training exercise to show you how to perform the 147 break. According to Paul Catlin from Rainham in Essex, if you start a trick-shot, clear the table, and in a line place all of the balls in the correct order, ie. Red, Yellow, Green, Brown, Blue, Pink, and Black, as you press the Black the screen should flash red. And once the screen has stopped flashing, go to Demo on the main Options screen and watch the mastery of the 147 break.



FEVER PITCH

PLAYER'S GUIDE

They push, they shove, they score goals now and again. Those turf tearing 'characters' from US Gold's 90% scoring Fever Pitch are back, but this time they've come to help! However unlikely it may seem from the likes of Barger and Gdiverman they've invaded the tips pages with the intention to help in an exclusive Player's Guide to all the moves, grooves, and hidden cheats you could possibly need.
MEAN MACHINES have been in touch with the creators of the game to get the in-depth report on the essential weaknesses and strengths of every special character in the game and all of their specific techniques.



TOURNAMENT MODE

Now's your chance to build up the ultimate team of special players that will lead you to success. In your first round against Kuwait you *must* score more than three goals to qualify for the option to recruit a star player. In the first selection the choice is between either Marco 'The Marker Rigatoni' with his amazing adhesive marking abilities, or Peter 'Cheesy Keeps' Stilton — goalkeeper of the rich and flukiest. The best option here is to enlist Cheese Boy Stilton as soon as poss to prevent your goal from being torn apart by a barrage of high velocity cannonball attacks from the opposition.

Once old Stilton is in place and guarding the goal mouth, it's time to get to build up a secure defence. Now this is the correct time to employ the passionate Italian romancer, Marco. Place him in the centre of the defensive wall to make sure that all of the opposition attacks are brought to a sudden halt by one of the greatest markers in the business.

As the tournament continues, other players will be wanting to join up with the team, and as with any football team, the key to league success is careful positioning of the right man in the right place. To assist you in your managerial responsibilities analyse the following info on the players and their talents.

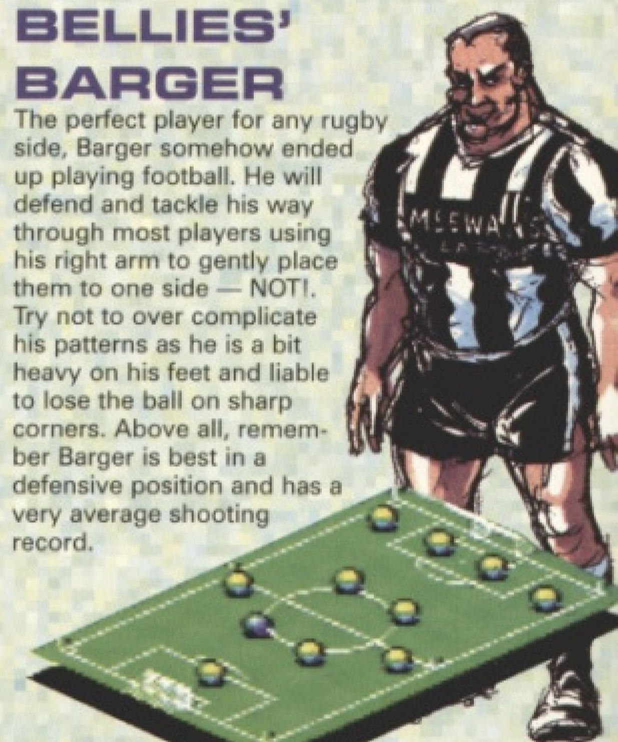
PETER 'PLAYMAKER' PERFECT

Spot-on accuracy whenever passing to fellow team mates, makes Peter an integral part of any team. Place him in the heart of the action after successive attempts have failed, and watch him pass the length of the field for a golden goal scoring opportunity.



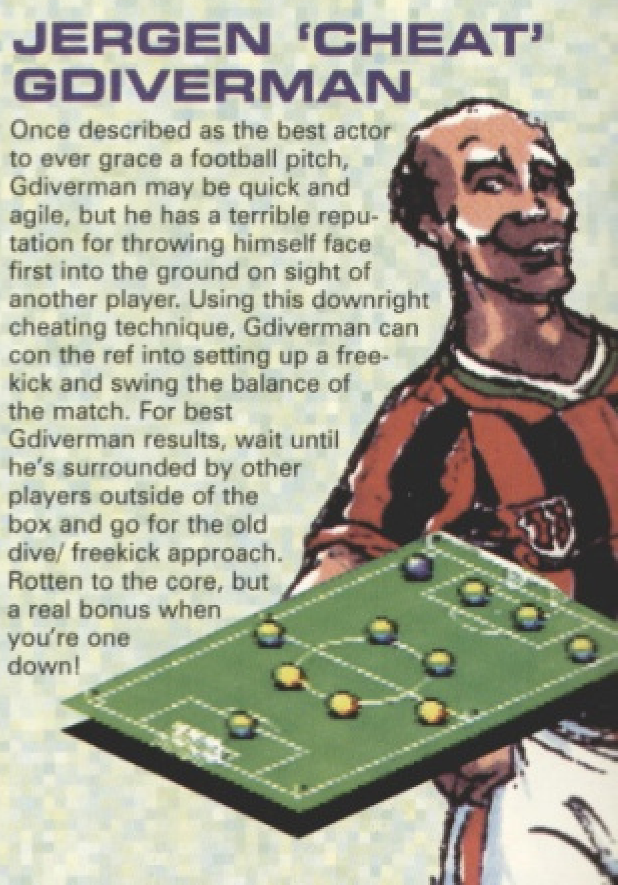
BARRY '10 BELLIES' BARGER

The perfect player for any rugby side, Barger somehow ended up playing football. He will defend and tackle his way through most players using his right arm to gently place them to one side — NOT!. Try not to over complicate his patterns as he is a bit heavy on his feet and liable to lose the ball on sharp corners. Above all, remember Barger is best in a defensive position and has a very average shooting record.



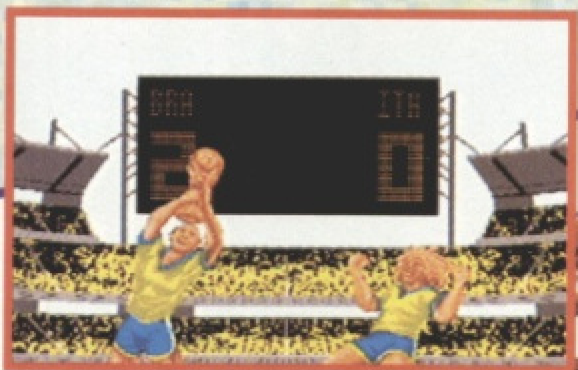
JERGEN 'CHEAT' GDIVERMAN

Once described as the best actor to ever grace a football pitch, Gdiverman may be quick and agile, but he has a terrible reputation for throwing himself face first into the ground on sight of another player. Using this downright cheating technique, Gdiverman can con the ref into setting up a free-kick and swing the balance of the match. For best Gdiverman results, wait until he's surrounded by other players outside of the box and go for the old dive/ freekick approach. Rotten to the core, but a real bonus when you're one down!



ERNIE 'LE STRIKER' CONTAINER

Ernie, younger brother to Eric, has a right foot on him like a cannon, and his ability to curve the ball to near right angles is a bonus to any team. Not only is his power a pleasure to witness, but it's also a key tool in weakening the opposition's as they cower in the path of his pace, ball control, and twisting. Only Tricky comes anywhere near his talent, but even he can't match the sheer power of the continental goalscorer.





MARCO 'MARKER' RIGATONI



Marco's special moves cannot be used by the player, but stick him the right spot and admire the boy and his tenacity when it comes to sticking to and stealing the ball from players on a break. Sign him up as soon as you get the chance.



ICKY 'TRICKY' DISCORAMA

Tricky is the crème-de-la-crème of any footballer on a Fever Pitch side. He is fast of the mark, able to control the ball even when twisting and turning away from his opponent, and what's more, he has an incredible ability to jump tackles while still controlling and holding onto the ball.Use Tricky to charge the other team and run the wings allowing his speed and ball control to leave the other side gobsmacked in a trail of his dust. But watch out — his pace may be impressive but his shooting skills aren't quite so hot!



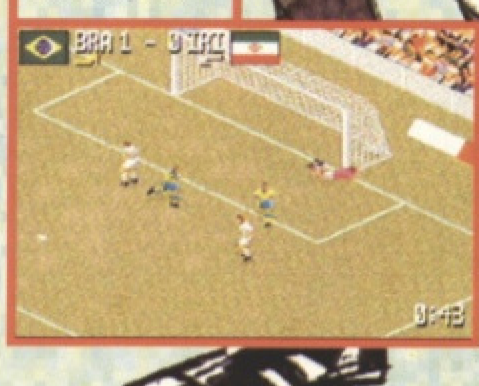


Tip: When you get into this box here, kick.



I suppose it all makes sense if you read the tips.

Our guide takes you right up to the goal... and beyond!



EMO ' BALL-BLAZER' BIKOMOZO

Last, but certainly not least in the Fever Pitch hall of 'pain' is Bikomozo. With the ability to slog the ball so hard it reacts with the friction in the air and instantly bursts into flames, Emo is the ultimate front man for any success hungry team. For the best results, team Emo with Playmaker, ensuring Playmaker feeds the young goal destroyer with plenty of opportunities. Now sit back and watch the score shoot through the ceiling.



FREE KICKS

Firstly use the directional marker and place it on the point of the most outer section of the arc in which you want the ball to go and hit the B button. Then move the marker into the area of the goal that you want to target and press the B button to set the height. Now don't forget to pound the B button once more to send the ball rocketing into the net. Use the D-Pad to set the after touch once the ball is in flight.







ON THE BALL!

Now you've studied the players special abilities optimum positions , the time has come to take to the pitch and practise these moves to really send the results sky high and to the top of the league.

CORNERS

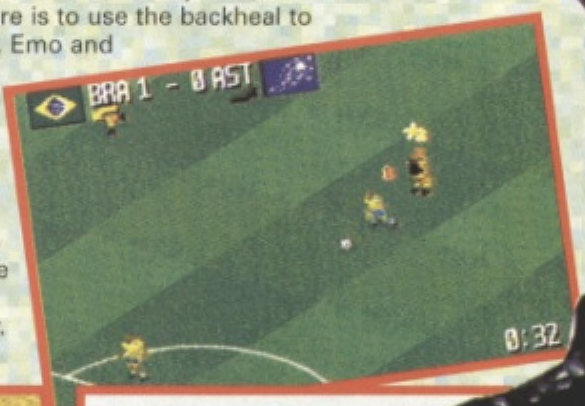
From the corner flag cross the ball with the A button after picking out the player you wish to pass the ball to. As the ball is crossed, carefully wait until the ball is in position, and then use the B button to head the ball into the top right or left corner of the open goal. If you are crossing the ball during a forward play, use Tricky to run the wing and then the B+C buttons (C six button) to cross the pass. Again wait until the ball is in position and use the B button to send it home and dry. Alternatively, if the ball is crossed you can use the B button to slide your chosen striker into a goal scoring opportunity. Don't worry if these moves seem a bit tricky at first, as practise is required to master the control system.

PLAYING DIRTY

No one likes a dirty low-down rotten cheat, but also, no one likes to lose – so use your opportunity to foul off the ball as much as you want. During a thrown-in, if you press the B button, this will kick the opposition to the ground and leave him rolling in agony. What's more flying headers (headbutts!) are another source of foul play that is guaranteed to result in a bone-crunching collision.

BACKHEELS

The B+A buttons (Z six button) on the used together act as a backheal pass to create confusion and space when confronted by another player. A top tip here is to use the backheal to allow the forwards, Emo and Ernie, to get forward into position. Also, in a goalmouth scramble for the ball, backhealing is a cunning method to give the team some extra space for a golden opportunity.





Look at the box marked 'corners' now.



And this is when you win.

FEELING HOT, HOT, HOT! FEVER HOT!!





WIN

A WEEK AT TH BOBBY CHARLTON INTERNATIONAL SPORTS SCHOOL AND COPIES OF FEVER PITCH!

How many times have you heard grown ups whine on about consoles and how when they were kids they used to play outside in the fresh air? Funny how the number of reported cases of pneumonia have dropped over the past couple of decades. Still s'pose they've got a point and stuff, and that's why we've given our wholehearted support to US Gold and this amazing Fever Pitch compo.
So what's in it for the for you?... Well two lucky funsters will spend a whole week training to be true footballing stars at the widely acclaimed Bobby Charlton International Sports School, a must for any football fan!
For the week the winners will be given first class training from fully qualified, experienced coaches who will concentrate on developing footballing skills to the max. What's more, they'll get a visit to Old Trafford for a tour around the ground, and even receive visits from the stars. But that's not your lot, as five lucky runners up will still have fun on the console footy field with a copy of Fever Pitch for their Megadrive. What are you waiting for? Grab that thinking cap, a pen, and postcard, a stamp, answer the question below, and run as fast as your legs will carry you to the nearest post box to try your luck for a prize.



TWO FIRST PRIZE WINNERS

A WEEK AT THE BOBBY CHARLTON INTERNATIONAL SPORTS SCHOOL.

FIVE RUNNERS UP

COPY OF FEVER PITCH
FEVER PITCH T-SHIRT

QUESTIONS

1. Name the Fever Pitch character with a passion for chips, beer, and fighting. Is it?
A. — Billy 'Bashing' Bunting
B. — Barry '10 Bellies' Barger
C. — Bernie 'Blighter' Beefer

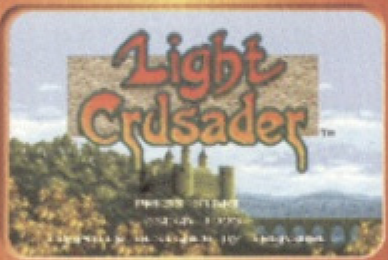
2. What's the name of the player who throws the ball in Baseball?
A. — The Bunger
B. — The Pitcher
C. — The Lobber

3. Who is Bobby Charlton's famous TV weather personality daughter?
A. — Michael Fish
B. — Ulrika Johnson
C. — Susan Charlton

Now pop your answers on a postie (postcard, not a friendly Royal Mail employee) and send them on their way to: FEELING HOT, HOT, HOT! FEVER HOT!!, FEVER PITCH COMPO, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

RULES

Normal rules of entry for EMAP Images competitions apply. In the event of a tie a winner will be selected from correct entries. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Winners will be notified and competition results printed in a later issue of MEAN MACHINES.



BY	SEGA
RELEASE	SEPTEMBER
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
MEG	16

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD

CONTINUES
RAM SAVE

SKILL LEVELS
1

RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

ORIGIN

Originally entitled Relayer, Light Crusader is a classic example of the isometric adventure. File next to Landstalker.

GAME AIM

Unravel the mystery of Green Row, where the peasants are disappearing. The answer lies in a multi-level puzzle dungeon.

BEAT THIS

First day: entry to level 2.



Diary of David, Gentleman Adventurer and fop. Today, I arrived back in Green Row, my home town, after some years of travelling and gaining experience in foreign lands and the gay parlours of the capital cities of Europe, in the service of our great liege, Frederick. I can hardly say it pleases me to return to this one-horse town, but I was summoned by an urgent plea from our lord.

I started to smell the peasants some miles out. As I passed through the decrepit environs of this Black Forest backwater (famous only for cherry cream sponge and a dance where men slap each other's buttocks), I perceived a sense of uneasiness. At first I thought it was my apparel of tight jodhpurs and jolly threads and shoulder-length coiffured blond locks that unnerved the filthy wretches on the wayside. On reaching the castle, I discovered that actually there have been some strange of abductions of late. The town's population is dropping faster than from cholera in the town well. The people are full of rabid talk of demons prowling graveyards and the like, and the whole affair looks like casting an unwelcome shadow over the annual cheese-sniffing festival.

OUT ON THE TOWN

Things commence in the sleepy town of Green Row. More comatose than sleepy, as most of the townsfolk seem to hang around like Zombies (must be the 'shock' of all their relatives' being abducted, not shortage of memory for trivial animations). In any case, not much goes on in Green Row,

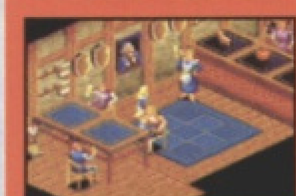


PALACE

Well, it's worth going here just to find out exactly what you are meant to be doing.

TAVERN

Somewhat lacking in that 'Harvester'-style welcome, but food is available nonetheless.



FIELD

Amuse yourself amongst the lifestock. Then again, perhaps not.



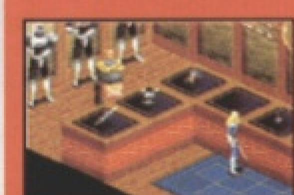
WARP ROOM

It's significance becomes clear only later in the game.



WEAPONS SHOP

Most of the goods are frighteningly priced, and only available much later on.



GRAVE-YARD

For the assistance of really dumb players: look carefully!



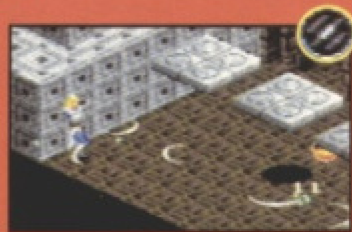


MAGIC SHOP
Supplies of the elements are readily available.

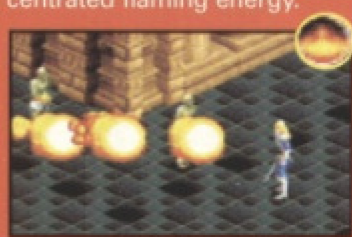
MAYBE, BUT NOT A LOT

The Arcane arts work their way into a game which employs the mind as much as the hand. The old chestnut — 'elemental magic' rears its head, with icons to collect corresponding to Earth, Air, Fire and Water. By toggling with these on the magic screen, all sorts of spell combinations come about. Some of these are just general battle spells, whereas others have specific uses which you must discover.

SPELL:WIND
FORMULA: Wind
EFFECT: Releases an aimed sickle of damaging wind energy.



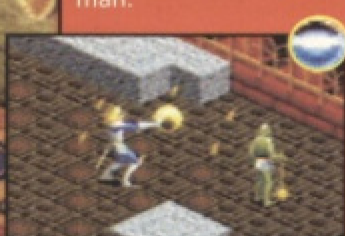
SPELL:FIRE
FORMULA: Fire
EFFECT:Fires a missile of concentrated flaming energy.



SPELL:EARTHQUAKE
FORMULA: Earth
EFFECT: Creates a room wide earth tremor. Damage in a wide area, but most effective when enemy is at the epicentre.



SPELL:HEAL
FORMULA: Water
EFFECT: Each use restores one point of health to your swordsman.



SPELL:FIRE WIND
FORMULA: Wind+Fire
EFFECT: Powerful arcing trail of fire. More power than nor



SPELL:THUNDER
FORMULA: Wind+Earth
EFFECT: Devastating lightning bolt which homes in on enemies.



SPELL:ICE
FORMULA: Wind+Water
EFFECT: Freezes most enemies and has other subtle uses.



SPELL:METEOR
FORMULA: Fire+Earth
EFFECT:A rumbling renegade dense lump is unleashed, crushing all in its path.



SPELL:CURE
FORMULA: Fire+Water
EFFECT:A spell to deal with the effects of poison.



SPELL:GUARDIAN
FORMULA: Earth+Water
EFFECT: Summons a faerie protector to add to your fighting skills.



SPELL:NEEDLECRCK
FORMULA: Air+Fire+Earth
EFFECT:A formidable conjuration, sending a swarm of magic missiles against your targets.



SPELL:TURN UNDEAD
FORMULA: Air+Earth+Water
EFFECT: Effective on certain foes which are invulnerable to conventional attack.



SPELL:SHIELD
FORMULA: Fire+Earth+Water
EFFECT: Fields a magical aura around you that sustains a number of hits.



SPELL:CONFUSE
FORMULA: Air+Fire+Water
EFFECT: Scatters your enemies and breaks their attack down.



SPELL:JUDGEMENT
FORMULA: Air+Fire+Earth+Water
EFFECT:The union of elements produces a destructive spell covering a wide area.



FORMULAS

FIRE · WATER · AIR · EARTH



GOING DOWN

The dungeon consists of four large levels. Within each is a series of distinct rooms. Some are filled with enemies, others have hazards, and others demand solutions that are normally a mixture of dexterity, timing and lateral thinking. Tackling frightening boss creatures also make up part of the work in your dungeon jaunt. Here's a sneak peek at oubliettes one to three:



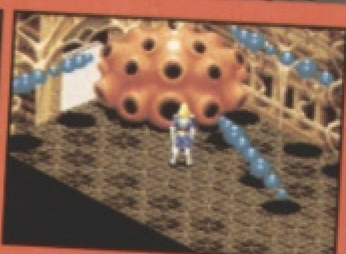
LEVEL 1
introducing you to the gameplay and setting simple tasks.



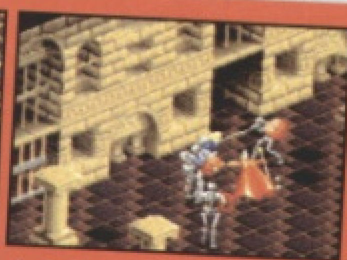
LEVEL 1



1. In this room, your path takes you up a spiral of platforms.



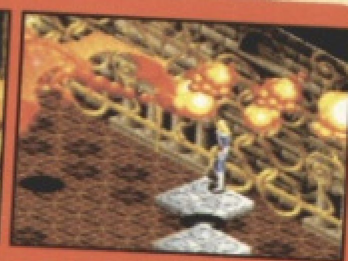
2. This gruesome creature emits worms from every orifice! Like Oz.



3. Occasionally you come across a whole legion of undead minions.



4. This swivelling beam provides a transport method.



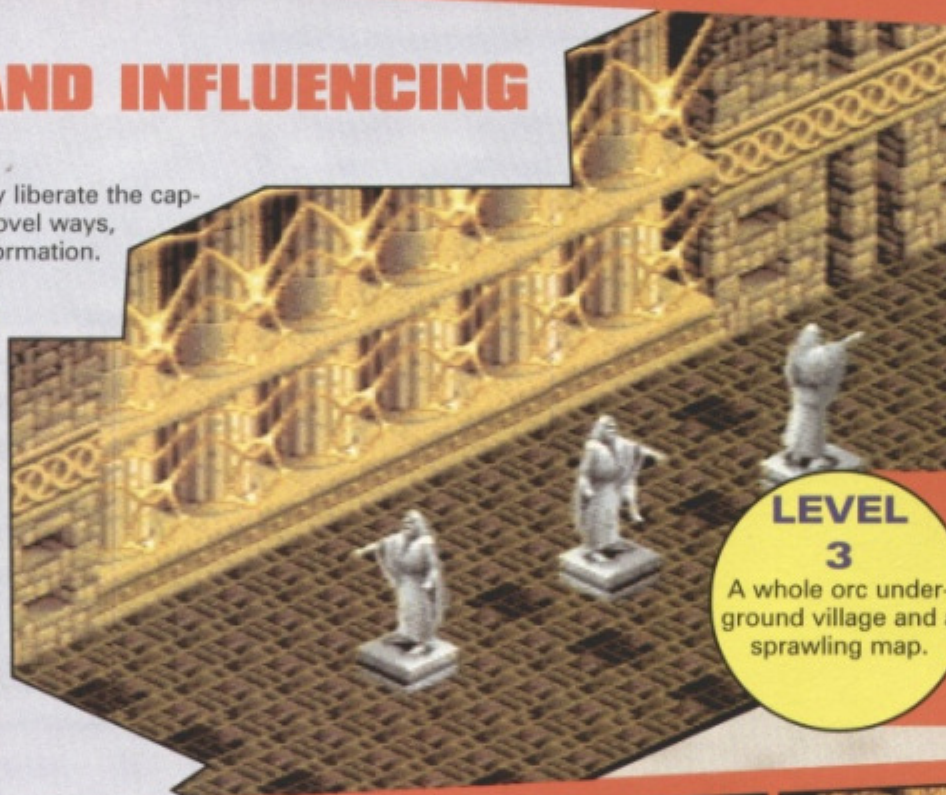
5. David gets a roasting at the level climax.

MAKING FRIENDS AND INFLUENCING PEOPLE

As you travel through the catacombs, you'll gradually liberate the captive townsfolk. These are being held in a variety of novel ways, and usually express their gratitude with a titbit of information.



You need to cross the culture gap to get any further.



LEVEL 3
A whole orc underground village and a sprawling map.



LEVEL 3



1. You tumble into the lair of a vicious she-snake.



2. Make a fast buck by taking on all Orc comers in the ring.



3. "We're digging a hole". Liberate the captives from the privatised gas board.



4. That old chestnut 'Simon' makes an appearance here.



5 Tricky and clever. Three bombs with different timers, a clock and a lift. Discuss...



6
fr

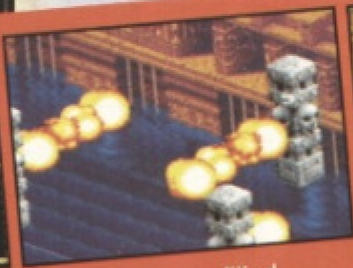


LEVEL 2
Bigger rooms, more complex puzzles and less leeway for mistakes.


LEVEL 2



1. You are asked for assistance and, being an adventurer, how can you refuse?.



2. Several water-filled rooms present themselves. This one has flame hazards.



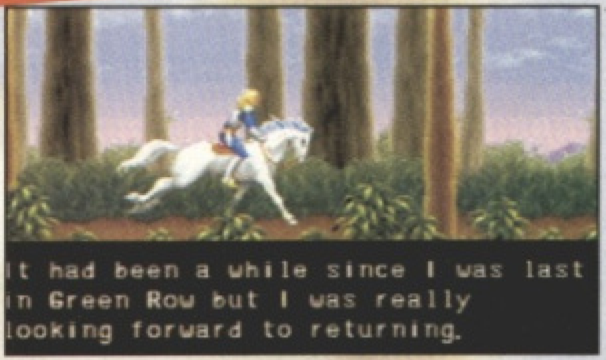
3. You catch a hideous wall monster about to devour a hapless villager.



4. Another logic puzzle, this time involving a rotating laser.









6. Ou the blue an attack fromater wyvern.



7. Donning the garb and appearance of an orc, you charm you way into restricted areas.

BOMBS, BEAMS AND BARRELS

The dungeon chambers of Light Crusader are frequently separated by heavy doors, that cannot be opened by any normal means. Blasting them open is the only option, and there are various incendiary means of doing this. Bringing the explosive into range of the door often constitutes a puzzle, but our David is a bright lad...



BOMB
Each has a fuse of varying lengths.



BARREL
May be pushed into position. Short fuse.



BEAM
When this light source strikes the door, it opens.

THE CRYSTAL MAZE

One of the levels of the maze is constructed around the sub-task of collecting four coloured orbs. These are encased in four statues, in far-flung rooms. They each have a puzzle which has to be solved to free the orb. We won't give away the answer to any of these, though they each have a vaguely scientific solution: colour, astronomy, geography...





COMMENT



GUS

Treasure will obviously try their hand at anything;: the frenzy of Gunstar; the madness of Headdy; the bossiness of Alien Soldier and now a fully-fledged mediaeval slash-a-thon in the form of Light Crusader. The end product, after a very protracted creation (we first previewed this as Relayer, early last year) is a fair testament to their programming skill and ingenuity. Light Crusader is a highly original mix of puzzle solving, object manipulation and combat. The strength of the game is the way it gels these elements together in the form of a huge dungeon quest.

However, there is a danger that this subtle merits of the game could get lost and for it to appear, well, a bit boring. The first level is too gentle an introduction, and sometimes, just when things are getting quite exciting, the pace slackens off and you are left to wander. I also think it's our duty to pass out a quite-easy-game warning for Light Crusader — it's all too easy to save and continue. That's a shame, since the game looks fabulous, is intelligently constructed and frequently gives real player satisfaction when you overcome its hurdles. Knocks the shoddy likes of Addams Family Va!ues into touch, where they belong.



These holey things take me back to Flash Gordon: the movie and Peter Duncan's 'Rites of passage' walk-on bit.

COMMENT



STEVE

After the disappointing Alien Soldier (well, I thought it was crap, anyway), Treasure hit peak form again with the stunning Light Crusader. Although the game has been in development longer than most RPGs, it's easy to see where all the work has gone — it looks stunning. LC's closest comparisons are the old Ultimate games, and the simple puzzles each room offers offers a welcome breather from more complex RPGs. However, the 'push X to Y to achieve Z' formula may not appeal to all, and whilst there is a greater mission, I somehow doubt LC's lasting appeal. True, there's plenty to see and do, but then again so have Thor and Soleil, and I guarantee they'll last a bit longer than this.

GIVE US THIS DAY

A range of edible items crop up throughout the adventure, with some dying foes leaving you lumps of fillet steak and raw eggs as an unlikely last gesture. These are filed into your inventory, which also carries keys and useful items. As it tends to get messy, use the 'sort' command to arrange your inventory into types.



GRAPHICS 94

▲Sumptuous back-drapery throughout and great sprites.
▼The spells lack a bit of sparkle. The perspective is sometimes deceiving.

ANIMATION 87

▲Very smooth scrolling.
▼Not exceptional character animation.

MUSIC 85

▲Some of the more ambient music works well.
▼The boss attack music is just horrendous! It's a mystery how it got in.

EFFECTS 84

▲Fully textured, incredibly fast 3D creates the most convincing
▼Larger elements of complex background are badly handled by

PLAYABILITY 92

▲The mix of action and thought is instantly compulsive, and accessible to everyone.
▼Some bosses are way too easy.

LASTABILITY 79

▲The save option prevents frustration, but makes the game too penetrable in the process.

OVERALL

No less stunning than Treasure's other releases. A superlative arcade adventure with great playability.

80

The best gets even better!

We've got a wealth of new additions lined up for the July issue of PC Review. Here's just a few to whet your appetite...

EASY-TO-USE TUTORIALS

Expert advice and crystal clear step-by-steps guides to getting the most out of your PC - whether you're using it for graphics, DTP or even lottery predictions...



US TODAY

The best products, the latest news from the eagerly awaited E3 consumer electronic show in Las Vegas



INTERACTIVE

Read our new, expanded section for reviews of the very best in multimedia



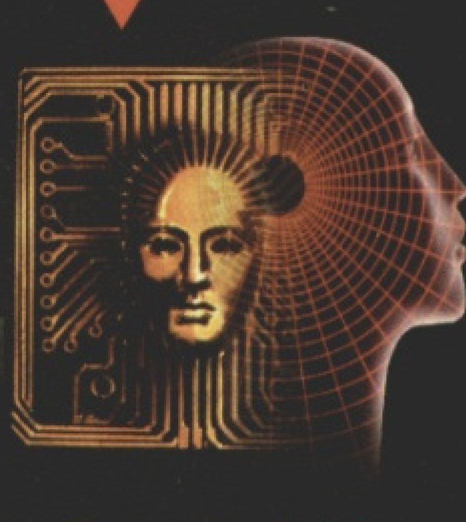


GRAPHICS GALLERY

From beginner to expert, we'll take you in hand and show you how to create stunning visuals like this.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

What does it mean? How will it affect you? Plus - make a date with an AI partner.



GAMES

A brace-and-a-half of the finest games reviewed including Apache and AIV Network$



On sale now. Don't miss it!

MEGA GAME



BY	KONAMI
RELEASE	NOW
PRICE	IMPORT (£85)
GAME TYPE	SHOOT EM UP

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

1-2 PLAYERS

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY

CONTINUES
UNLIMATED

SKILL LEVELS
8

RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

ORIGIN

Deluxe Pack is a conversion of Ultimate Parodius, an earlier SNES game, which itself is a parody of earlier Konami coin-ops.

GAME AIM

Blast, blast and blast your way on a voyage of absurdity and shoot 'em up surreality.

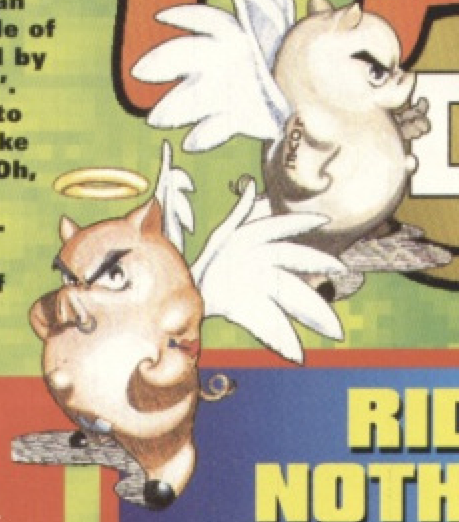
BEAT THIS

170,000 (1st day, 3 lives)



PARODIUS DELUXE

Ah, Jenkins! Come in and sit down. Now, I have here your record. You've been at the Department of Civil Defence Planning for some six months, and by all accounts you've settled in". "Yes, Under secretary". "But, as I'm sure you'll appreciate, Jenkins, some of your recent reports have raised some eyebrows. Here's one directive — for the training of an elite squadron of naked pigs; another for research into training penguins for aerial combat duties. You have also filed reports about beings from another world, 'bunnies' you describe them, preparing to attack Earth with a large, cream-filled piping bag.". "Yes, Under secretary". "Now, Jenkins, just say I was prepared to stretch plausibility to its limits and believe your 'invasion' warnings. Why would our current conventional forces be inadequate and instead require this 'menagerie' to launch a counter-attack". "That would be because the enemy have constructed an impregnable fortress made of Battenburg cake, fortified by large pieces of kiwi fruit". "I see. It's all beginning to make sense. Would you like to wait outside Jenkins. Oh, and don't mind the burly nurse in the starched uniform with a moustache. Nothing to worry yourself about....those fast-track appointments...".



RIDICULE IS NOTHING TO BE SCARED OF

Parodius is a game of downright weirdness, typified by its boss characters which pop up just when you least expect or need them. Their own attacks can be unconventional but they succumb to a good old-fashioned onslaught on your part.

PANDA BALLERINA

Her pirouettes through up all sorts of furry detritus, but her beaky fez is a weak point.



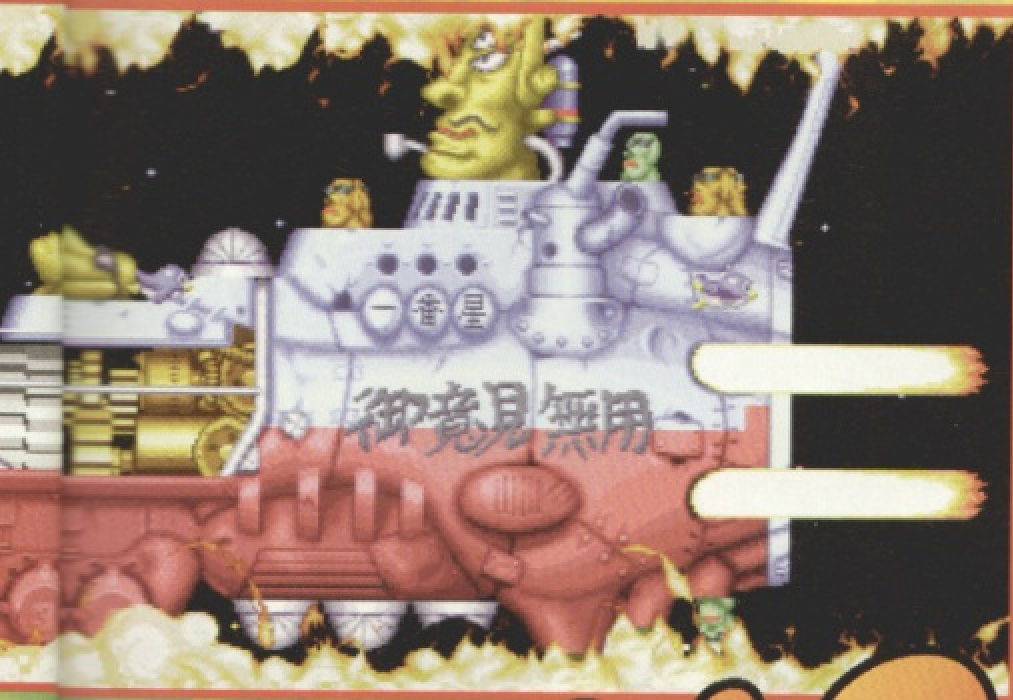


THE RATHER BIG MERMAID

You can literally be stung by her scornful laughter, and her tail has a sting of its own.



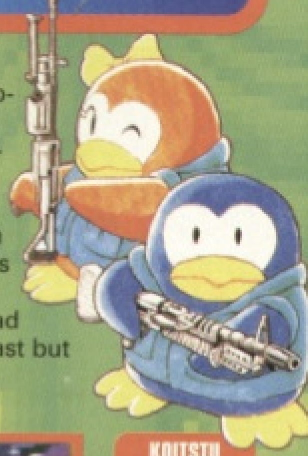




DIUS
E PACK



THE MAGNIFICENT EIGHT



Eight candidates offer their services for the Parodius missions. That's the four from the previous game supplemented by four even more bizarre newcomers.
The tally actually rises to sixteen if you count the differently shaded and named dual characters that appear in two-player mode.
Each character has a power-up path, that shows each of the special weapons offered on its icon bar. There's a different path for each character, but they share common characteristics, like a beam weapon, a spread weapon, extra firepower 'options' and a shield. The last but one icon is the 'Oh My God!', which catastrophically removes all power-ups if selected by accident.



DEATH BY DOUBLE CREAM

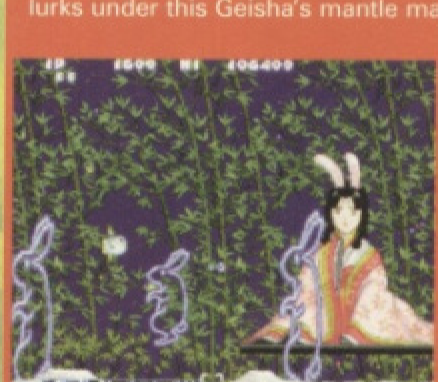
This piping-bag and laser apparatus lurks behind the Battenburg fortress. Its wicked smile is a portent of approaching doom.





BUNNY GIRL

By this stage, a barrage of neon bunnies will not surprise you, but what lurks under this Geisha's mantle may well do.





COMMENT



GUS

Parodius is one of my all-time favourites. It was one of the first SNES games I played and it convinced me of the machine's and Konami's brilliance. Three years on, the follow-up does not have the same stupendous effect, but it's still a wicked piece of game alchemy. Ultimate Parodius has the same killer combination of cuteness, attention to detail, graphical excellence and stupidity that marked out the original. And even the original is on here for good measure. I must say, I prefer it. The clown level is one of my favourite sequences in game history. This game is a delight for shoot 'em up fans, and a relief for Saturn owners who have put up with a barrage of concept games, too eager to experiment with the hardware at the expense of playability. This is simple, fun and deserves to be a huge hit. One warning for buyers of the import version — it has unlimited continues, which spoils the game considerably. The official version will have five continues max, Konami tell us. Discipline yourself to that or risk spoiling the game.

IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD...

If Parodius is not mental enough for you, there are ways to make it more to your taste. There are eight skill settings, with an absurd amount happening on the top notch. There is a two-player mode which is a complete scrum, due to the amount of power-ups, fire-power and enemy explosions on screen. There is also two special stages to tax you to the limit. The first comes once as a reward for completing the game. The other is selectable from the title screen, after the game has been completed, and is a no-breaks assault of enemy sprites.

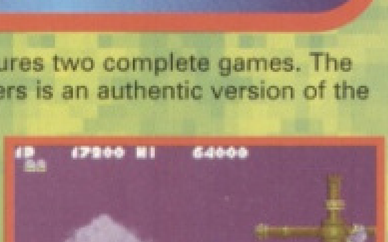






ORIGINAL AND BEST

The 'Deluxe Pack' features two complete games. The bonus for Saturn owners is an authentic version of the original Parodius. It's a fully-fledged eight-level shoot 'em up of its own, and though hailing from 1990, it's an all-time classic. Even on the 32bit machine, some of its effects and levels astound. It's a magnificent addition to the package.



My name's Scottie Pippin: AND I SELL ICE CREAM...

COMMENT



PAUL

For me, the original Parodius was the ultimate in shoot 'em up on the Super NES. Its mixture of rock hard level settings and completely hat-stand game environments shook the foundations of run-of-the-mill blaster clones. So I'm over the moon that not only the original, but also the sequel, are packaged on the Saturn. The graphics are stupendous, try counting the number of sprites on screen when confronting the Panda Ballerina; and the music is tremendous, fully exploiting the Saturn's sound quality. There are those, however, who have criticised this version for being too easy — a problem due to the infinite continues on the import version — but we have been assured that these will be removed for the UK release. Another rock solid release for an ever growing Saturn portfolio.

GRAPHICS — 90

▲Fabulous colouring and unrivalled silliness in the field of video game graphics.
▼Two dimensional layout.

ANIMATION — 86

▲An amazing amount going on at once. Hilarious animation on the enemies.

MUSIC — 92

▲Brilliant poppy remixes of classic tunes, American band music and chopsticks! The music really drives the game along.

EFFECTS — 87

▲The effects are silly enough to suit the game. Power-up announcements and big bangs.

PLAYABILITY — 92

▲Compulsive, intensive action. Moments of memorable mayhem.
▼No great variety, despite scenic changes.

LASTABILITY — 84

▲The two-player and special modes provide gratification from here to eternity.

OVERALL

A useful and desirable addition to the Saturn library, and an essential part of a shoot em' up collection.

90

the adventures of BATMAN & ROBIN

BY: SEGA

RELEASE: JUNE

PRICE: TBA

GAME TYPE: SHOOT 'EM UP

1-2 PLAYERS

24 MEG

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD

CONTINUES
1-6

SKILL LEVELS
1

RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

ORIGIN

The most recent Animated Series Batman manifestation is the inspiration for these adventures, and Konami's Probotector

GAME AIM

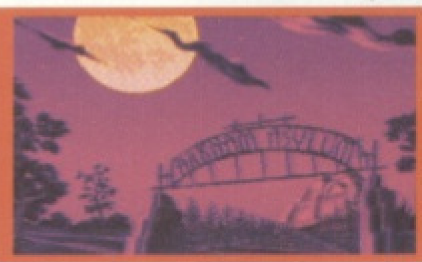
Work through various 'episodes' throwing batarangs and tackling huge bosses.

BEAT THIS

7TH (TRACK 1, NORMAL SETTING)

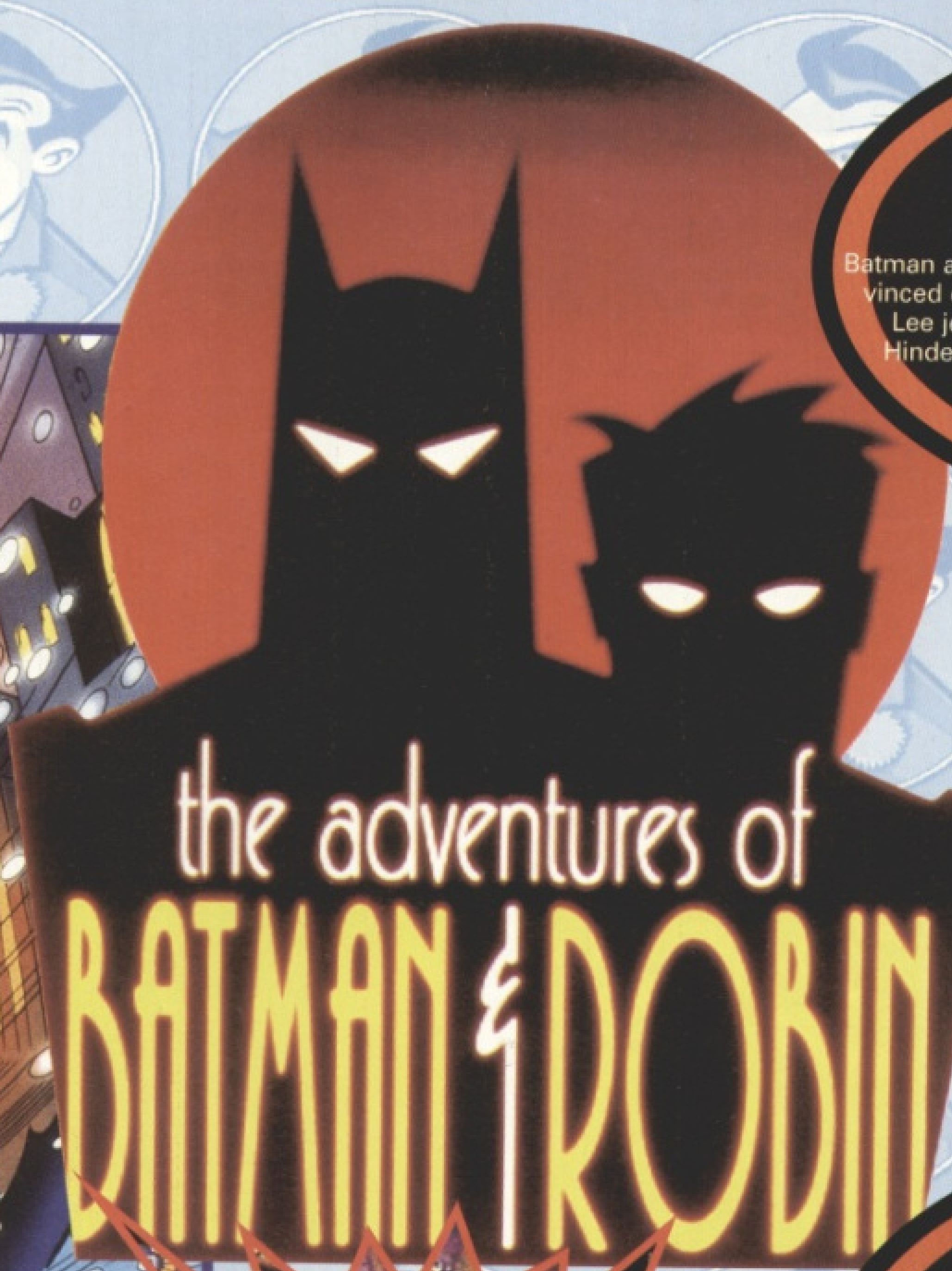
Down at Gotham City Home for the Mentally Deranged, some of the inmates are implementing their own brand of 'Care in the Community'. Instead of waiting for some well-meaning social worker in a chunky-knit jumper to give them day release, they decide to blow a hole in the antiquated building and make a run for it. Batman's greatest enemies that is. Lady Thatcher was tempted to throw in her lot with them, but like Donald Pleasance in the Great Escape, she failed the pin on the cell floor test. Klaxons honked, searchlights swept, and news reached Wayne Manor (or wherever it is) just as Bats and Robin were having their cocoa before turning in for the night. Even as those reports registered, and they were getting into sweaty lycra outfits, news of a raid on the Gotham City Bank came through...so they decided to get changed back into their bat gear and investigate. And this is what they saw...





Not bad for a Megadrive intro, eh?

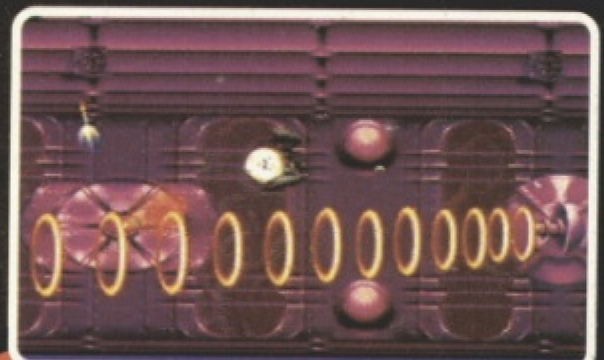




ACTION IN THE AIR!

Batman and Robin mount a set of precarious scaffolding, convinced of finding more than Harold Lloyd or a guy wearing Lee jeans at the top. Correct, bat freak! As Two-Face's Hindenburg zepellin looms overhead, and the gangster himself throws dynamite at the duo.

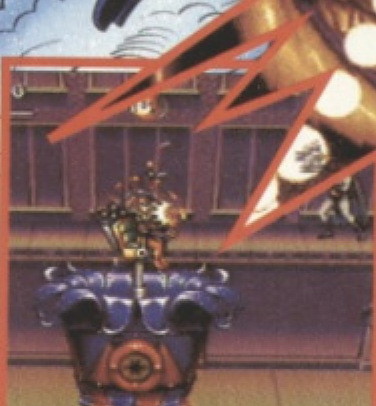




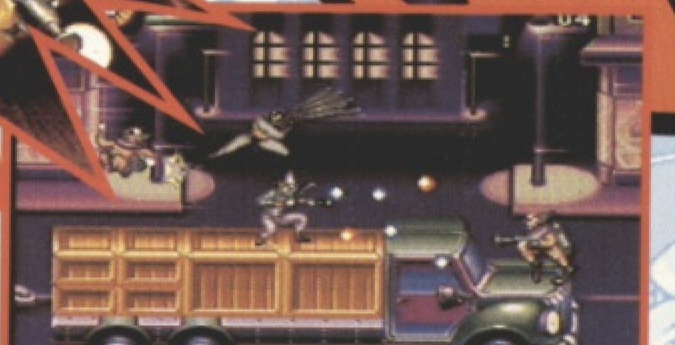
ACTION IN THE SKIES!

Batman spreads his parka wide and defies gravity, and the legions of helicoptering foes. After battling a ludicrous number of jets, bombs, missiles and bi-planes, he's expected to take on a huge sky-ship with raspberry ripple lasers and guns sticking out of every orifice.





Horror in a tub of Haagen Dazs.





Face Molly Weir in the Flash floor standoff.







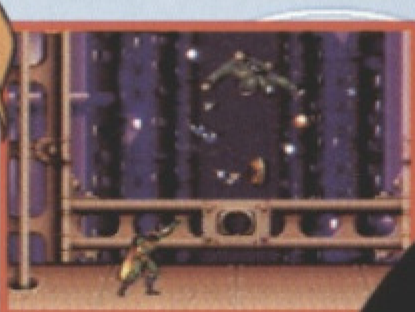


COMMENT



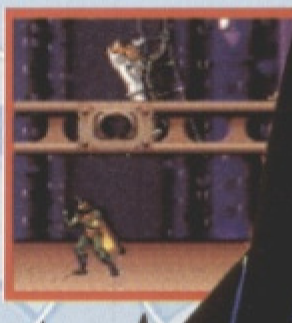
PAUL

I knew this was going to be a cracker the moment I laid eyes on it at the Work In Progress stage. I was totally engrossed by the frenzied Batarang action and the incredible use of perspective — just check out the design of the crane and the way it moves! What's more, for a change the characters have been faithfully recreated from the already fab animated series and include all of the old favourites. It also seems that the programmers have sorted out the problem with the difficulty setting that made the original version just too hard. That's not to say the game is easy in the slightest — I guarantee you'll still be slamming that joypad down on a frequent basis! A rare platformer worthy of your money.



Horror in an elevator.











The word 'dadaist' srpings to mind, but then I'm a snob.



He had a big bag marked swag.





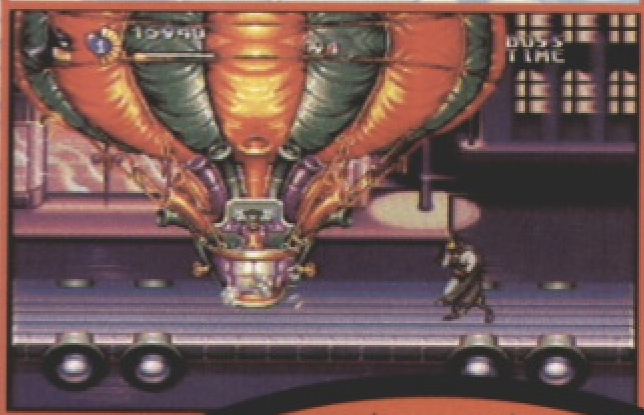
ACTION ON THE GROUND!

Batman and Robin patrol the the streets looking for trouble, and find it in a horde of Joker's minions carrying torches and bags marked 'swag'. Naturally suspicious, the dynamic duo set about extracting confessions, applying 'Rodney King' style tactics. Ged' em!



'Cos you're a baddie, I'm going to let rip right over you.

Bring on the Branson! Then, well use your imagination, but it involves size 10 DMs



COMMENT

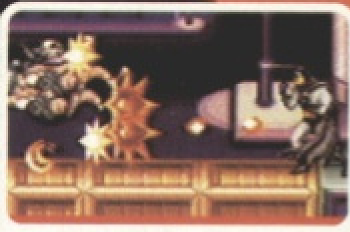


GUS

Batman hasn't changed a great deal since we first saw it for a Work In Progress, in appearance anyway. However, Clockwork Tortoise have chickened out and made it easier at the last minute, for what was shaping up to be one of the hardest Megadrive games ever. I thought at first that they'd gone too far in the other direction, as energy replacements cascade through the early levels. But it soon gets unreasonably difficult. But pleasantly so. Batman kicks in that masochistic pleasure enjoyed by real gamesplayers, who are rarely catered for (Earthworm Jim, at my last recollection). Tears, tuts, sighs and joypad tantrums lie within its chips. Visually it alternates between impressive and simplistic, but always stylish; sonically, well it sounds like Zyrinx did the music. It's Sega's big summer title, it's a big platform shooter, it's a good game, it's a worthy purchase.

YOUR 'RANG, M'LORD?

The boys bring a hefty supply of their patented Batarangs with them. Handy bat-sized nuggets of razor-sharp metal that slice their foes into chunk-sized nuggets of meat-in-jelly. There are three selectable colour-coded batarangs, changed by picking the relevent bat-shaped power-up disc. All three power-up if left unfired, in a kind of R-type monster weapon way.



RED (SPREAD)
The best all-rounder, with fire splitting up to three ways.



BLUE (LECCY)
Charged and ultimately potent weapons, but weak at first.



GREEN (DISC)
Limited weapons unless left to power up.

Not really much to look at here.



Just look at those pins.



ACTION IN A DISUSED FACTORY!

Amongst crates, consignments and PO staff having a sly 'tab', Batman comes across a joker mini-boss in a jet-propelled Stairmaster and in control of a crane made from old copies of Accolade's Ballz.



GRAPHICS — 89
▲Interesting use of perspective, nice bosses, originality and the stylishness of the animated series.
▼Repetitive in places.

ANIMATION — 90
▲Clever usage of parallax effects. Character animation is good — flipping torches etc.

MUSIC — 86
▲Good, after a Zyrinx sort of techno-sounding fashion.
▼No orchestral crescendo, as befits the subject matter.

EFFECTS — 84
▼The effects are tinkly and weedy. The explosions, especially, disappoint.

PLAYABILITY — 88
▲A lot of action, and constantly demanding. The bosses are novel.
▼Levels go on for too long with repeated gameplay.

LASTABILITY — 84
▲Its difficulty is balanced against a limited number of continues. Batman has a compulsive edge.

OVERALL — 87
Hard as rubber-coated Kevlar. Impenetrable as a swishy cape. Thrilling as a night time encounter.



BY: SEGA

RELEASE: NOW

PRICE: IMPORT (£85)

GAME TYPE: SHOOT EM UP

BREAKDOWN

1-2 PLAYERS

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD\WHEEL

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM

CONTINUES
5

SKILL LEVELS
2

RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY

ORIGIN

Grand Chaser takes the form of a futuristic racer, like SNES classic F-Zero.

GAME AIM

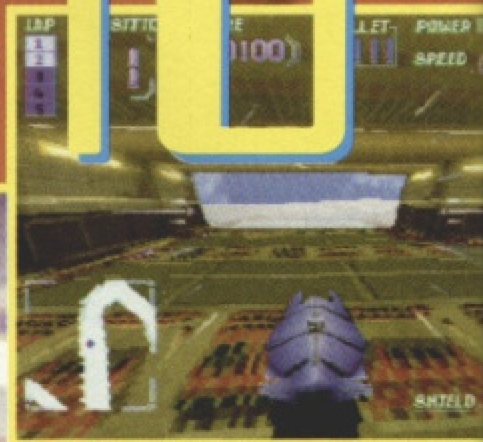
Beat four opponents in each of six planetary circuits.

BEAT THIS

Day One, win course 5.

GRAND

There have been several eras in human development. The foot age, when people had running races in order to win prizes. It wasn't very exciting, as crashes were rare and speeds never passed beyond the 20 mph mark. Then came the Wheel Age, which was a lot more promising. Everything blessed with the innovation of the wheel became a potential chariot — the supermarket trolley, the Harvester Dessert Hostess cart, the Renault 'Espace'.
But in the future we can see more leaps and further bounds. We're too sophisticated for low-tech wheels. We like the feeling of tin-foil against our skin, crew-cuts (pour homme et pour fille) and hovering super-cars of the future. And we're not interested in racing on earth. We cross the galaxy for light years, annihilating alien races, just to build a nice big race track on their funny little planets. I have seen the future — it is called Grand Chaser!



SIGHTS FOR FOUR EYES

You have weapons. Fire them. Hopefully they'll send some spac sled careening of into the WBY. One shell for each power-up run over. The opponents are more than capable of collecting their own.







SPACE MOUNTAIN

The harsh terrain of the track worlds lends itself to nothing other than deadly racing, as you shall clearly see. Two separate tracks for each planet:

TERRA

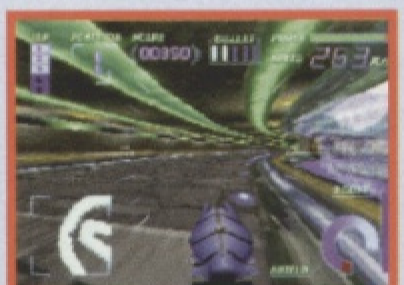
The most hospitable planet, with Croydon-esque tower blocks and a scenic waterfall.

GLACIES

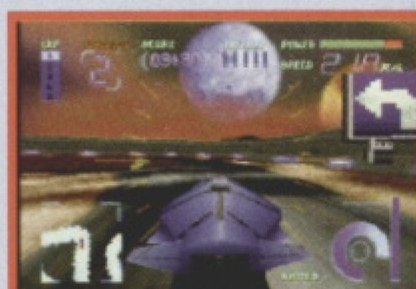
The obligatory skiddy ice-world (and we don't mean handling). There's secret passages in them thar hills.

*****

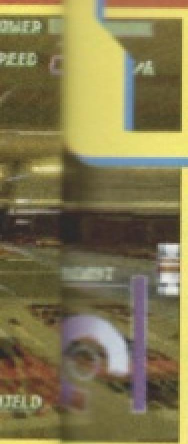
Planet of the Desert boots, the main feature here is mezzanine racing gantries (split-level, ya toss).







CHASER





SLED SLUTS

Before you race, peruse the rotating set of wheel-less wonders. Everyone has their 'type': the sporty type, the acceleration type. In addition to the sleds themselves, are the particulars of the engine, braking and steering.



The call it death caron. Actually, the don't.

COMMENT



GUS

Daytona has provided us with an early standard for Saturn driving games. I can accept that it's unlikely there will be a match for it, but even so, Grand Chaser looks pretty poor in comparison. Graphically it's okay, with a smooth one-player mode and reasonable split-screen option. But the courses are bland, the game so dull and the control unrewarding. I had trouble concentrating after half an hour' play, so despite the misleadingly 'alright' appearance, my opinion of Grand Chaser is that it's a right dog's dinner. The presentation is sparse, and the story of the 'story mode' virtually nonexistent. All adding up to a game worth missing.



That boy in the bandana tasted good.

COMMENT



STEVE

Whizz! Oh, there go my hopes for this. What I thought had all the potential to be better than Daytona is actually a shoddy, unresponsive racer requiring little skill as the player crashes through the levels. Graphically excellent, but what good is presentation if there's stuff-all underneath. File with Gale Racer and Astal under 'crap.'

NUBES

Keep your head in the clouds and your eyes on the stars. Thanks Casey! Then take on this windy city with its dragon mascot.



EVOFLAMMES

Terrifying world of the lava texture-mapping. Evo is smoky, twisty, with a flat underside.



GRAPHICS 89

▲Some nice metallic textures and high-resolution backdrops.

▼A feeling of sparseness and complete lack of character on the

ANIMATION 85

▲The sleds move well, conveying a good sense of anti-grav inertia.

▼The scrolling on the two-player

MUSIC 62

▼The minimal amount of music is wholly substandard.

EFFECTS 61

▼The potential for screaming, booming futuristic FX has been completely unexploited.

PLAYABILITY 64

▲A frisson of excitement accompanies the split-screen game.

▼The 'Story Mode' is dull by definition.

LASTABILITY 59

▼There is no real appeal to create times for the bland and boring selection of courses.

OVERALL

Graphics is the only area where this game has it together to some degree. Otherwise it's a 22nd Century non-event.

59



BY	SHINY VIRGIN
RELEASE	NOW
PRICE	£29.99
GAME TYPE	PLARFORM
PLAYERS	1
MEG	2

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD

CONTINUES
3

SKILL LEVELS
3

RESPONSIVENESS
HARD

ORIGIN

Jim first stormed onto the Megadrive last year, and thanks to amazing miniaturisation process has been shrunk down to the Gear.

GAME AIM

Blast and jump your way through level after level of Evil Queen Slug-For-A-Butt's doing.

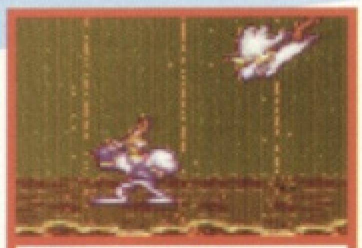
BEAT THIS

Defeat Evil the Cat at the end of his What the Heck! level.

He started life as a twinkle in the eye of a programmer, and now he's the talk of the console market, and even starring in his very own animated adventures! He is of course Earthworm Jim, and he's Game Gear bound with a mission to revolutionise platform gaming as we know it.

The scenario is the same as before — evil old Queen Slug-For-A-Butt kidnapping the lovely Princess and Jim being the only available worm character with a cybernetic warsuit. And what's more all of the levels appear to be in presence, so the real question is how does it play? Shall we have a look through the round window...





death chickens, begorrah!



MR WHIPPY

Jim's new cybernetic war suit comes fully equipped with its very own built-in plasma blaster to fend off the forces of darkness in the realm of the Butt Slug. Already loaded with a satisfactory 999 charges, the trusty sidearm can also be upgraded to fire off one ginormous blast and provides protection up to a point, that point being when the magazine runs dry. From this crucial moment and until Jim can find another cartridge, it's a case of using his head, quite literally, as a bull whip!



MEGA GAME



HOOKED ON YOU

In the course of Jim's adventures, the majority of power-ups dangle temptingly from hard to reach places. And try as he may, Jim cannot reach them by normal methods alone. Instead our wormular one must make use of his own body in a whipping action to clasp hold of the cunningly secreted silver hooks and swing to bonus bonanza.





animal magnetism





OOH ME ASTEROIDS!

There's no such thing as a free lunch, and the same applies for picking up another can of worms continue at the end of the Andy Asteroids 3D race with Psy-Crow. With all rockets at full speed ahead, Jim must collect a minimum number of plasma globes to qualify for another chance to save the beautiful Princess What's-Her-Name. To help him in the battle with the Crow, Jim can also collect nitro jetpacks and shields for added speed and protection.

COMMENT



STEVE

I can't believe how good this conversion is. The Megadrive version of EWJ is one of my favourite game, and my hopes for the hand-held game weren't high However, Eurocom. the team behind the conversion have crammed in most of the recognisable elements of the 16bit agme. Similarly, whilst it obviously suffers in the looks department, Game Gear Jim has all the playability of the original. Andy Asteroids, What The Heck, Psycrow... everything seems to be there in a new level format, and is every bit as fresh as the Megadrive game. Essential for all Game Gear owners..

COMMENT



PAUL

Prepare to be amazed! This is absolutely the best platform game I've ever seen on the Game Gear. The graphics are stupendous — fully capturing the animation, fluidity, and colour of the original 16-Bit version. Even the levels remain pretty much intact bar a few bits and pieces that have been excluded due to memory restrictions. All in all the team at Eurocom (responsible for the 8-Bit conversion) have achieved miracles in transforming one of the best platformers to ever hit the Megadrive onto a system that has been neglected recently. A 'must buy' for all Game Gear owners

GRAPHICS — 90

▲Absolutely fantastic! The animation, colour, and fluidity are all in evidence. A true achievement of on the Game Gear.

ANIMATION — 91

▲If you witnessed the original you won't be disappointed.
▼ Slowdown on the odd occasion.

MUSIC — 84

▲A valiant effort to re-create the sound of its 16-Bit big brother.
▼But suffers from the Gear's weak sound chip.

EFFECTS — 83

▲Best appreciated with a pair of headphones, surprisingly effective for the Gear.

PLAYABILITY — 89

▲The 8-Bit version captures almost all of the control of the original.

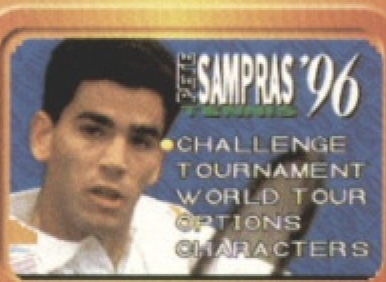
LASTABILITY — 90

▲Even on Practise mode you'll have a tough time completing the entire game.

OVERALL

It has to be said that this is one of the best looking and best playing platform games on the Game Gear. Fantastic.

90



BY CODEMASTERS

RELEASE JULY

PRICE £44.95

GAME TYPE SPORTS

1-4 PLAYERS

16 MEG

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD(J-CART)

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM

CONTINUES
PASSCODE

SKILL LEVELS
1

RESPONSIVENESS
MEDIUM

ORIGIN

An heavily updated version of Codemasters surprise summer hit of last year: Pete Sampras Tennis.

GAME AIM

Beat opponents by forcing the other player to make errors on court, by knocking the ball to where they can't hit it back.

BEAT THIS

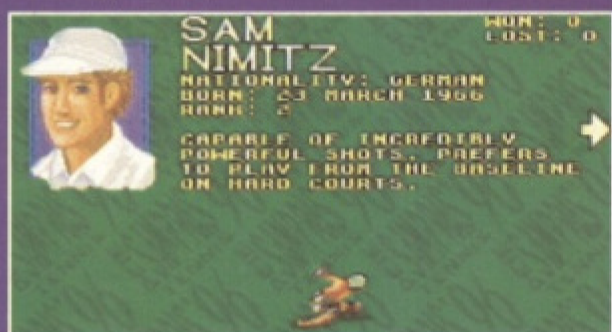
Potter-Delgado, 6-2

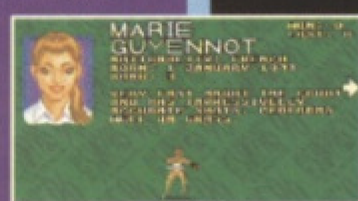
PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS '96

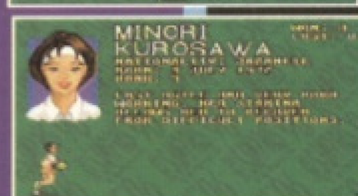
Wimbledon is often a time for shock results.Becker, Stich, Agassi and Sampras. They arrive unknown to us Brit tennis 'experts' whose knowledge of the game extends from the last week of June to the first week in July — and barely past the price of a punnet of strawberries. When Sampras took the title, it meant instant stardom. In Britain, tennis is Wimbledon and Wimbledon is tennis. Although we imagine the Wombles would think other wise.
Codemasters scored a similar shock victory with Sampras last year. Nobody seriously considered tennis being a big hit on the Megadrive, with the pile of other sims already out, but the quality of the game took it to number one. We guess they have similar hopes for this year's incarnation. In many ways it's much like its predecessor, but the team have added more than a few features that make it worthy of our, and your attention.

WORLD WIDE WEB

The core of the game is the single player tournament option. This doesn't cover the conventional tennis circuit, but is a series of encounters with each of the computer opponents leading up to Sampy himself.







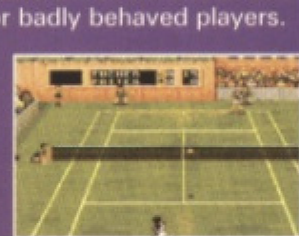
If I was a tennis player I'd change my name from Nimitz. It sounds like 'winnits.'



IN WITH A SHOUT

Sound is an area of distinct improvement from original Pete Sampras. The game has full speech scoring, with the umpire using the players' names. The response from the crowd is much more sophisticated than before. They respond to the action depending on the length of rallies or if particularly skill tactics are employed. There are even lone shouts of support, and heckling for badly behaved players.









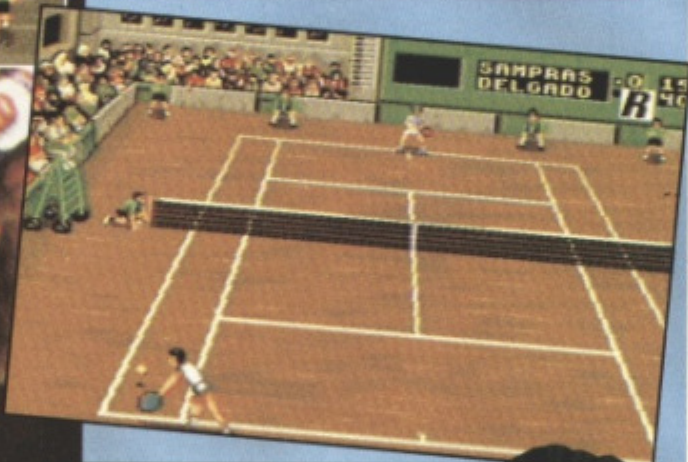
AS
'96





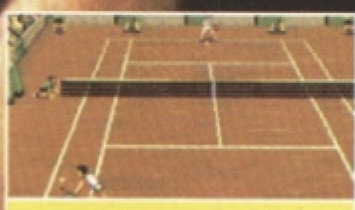
UK ROBOTICS

There are two hidden modes (at least) allowing you to take the game setting beyond the final frontier, and also play with a superhuman character. We will be revealing the methods in next month's tips section...





Look, Christopher Reeve's ok (top player).



A muddy court. It'll never catch on.



Honk, honk (guest caption by Phil King).



Tiny caption, eh!

COMMENT



STEVE

Against all the odds, Codemasters have managed to make the greatest Megadrive Tennis game even better. I really hate cliched comments, but whilst Sampras '96 retains the playability of the first game, the addition of extra shots and the parallax on the court, really does make it easier to play. The additions are nothing major, but the difference is like a year-old car that has never been serviced, and one that has. Everything about Sampras '96 is geared towards making the game simple to pick up, yet behind the deceptively easy facade lies a game with more shots and skills than Martina Whatsername. Smart.

COMMENT



GUS

After three years, the Megadrive finally produces a tennis game that beats Super Tennis on the SNES. It certainly outdoes the original Pete Sampras, which had loads of playability, but no so much in terms of graphics and sound. Rightly, Codemasters have avoided making the game itself unnecessarily complicated — although there is the chance to develop special tactics and shots. Instead, they have sought to improve the atmosphere of the game, to match that of real tennis. They have succeeded. The player reactions, the crowd, the umpire and animations all combine to produce a game that's great to watch as well as play. Reintroducing the J-Cart for free four-player expansion is an added bonus. This IS the definitive 16bit tennis game of any format. Don't look any further.



GRAPHICS — 80

▲Nice court and players, with all the attendent ball boys and girls.
▼Little variety.

ANIMATION — 84

▲Those 5000 frames cover all kinds of movements.
▼The sprites are slightly too small to appreciate all the detail.

MUSIC — 65

▼A bit yeugh. Codemasters always produce this sort of naff europap title stuff.

EFFECTS — 95

▲Fantastic! Probably the best use of FX on any Megadrive game. Convincing samples and little sounds, like the net.

PLAYABILITY — 93

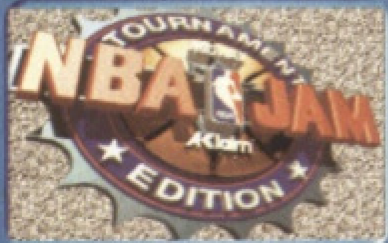
▲Easy to pick up. A deceptively wide range of options open to you.
▼The tournament option is limited an unrealistic.

LASTABILITY — 88

▲With mates, this has deadly lastability. Hugely entertaining doubles option and hidden modes.

OVERALL — 92

One of the definitive multi-player Megadrive games. As much as you could expect from tennis: Sampras has retained his world title.



BY	ACCLAIM
RELEASE	JUNE
PRICE	£49.95
GAME TYPE	SPORTS SIM
PLAYERS	1-4
MEG	32

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY
AVE

CONTINUES
NONE

SKILL LEVELS
N/A

RESPONSIVENESS
AVE

ORIGIN

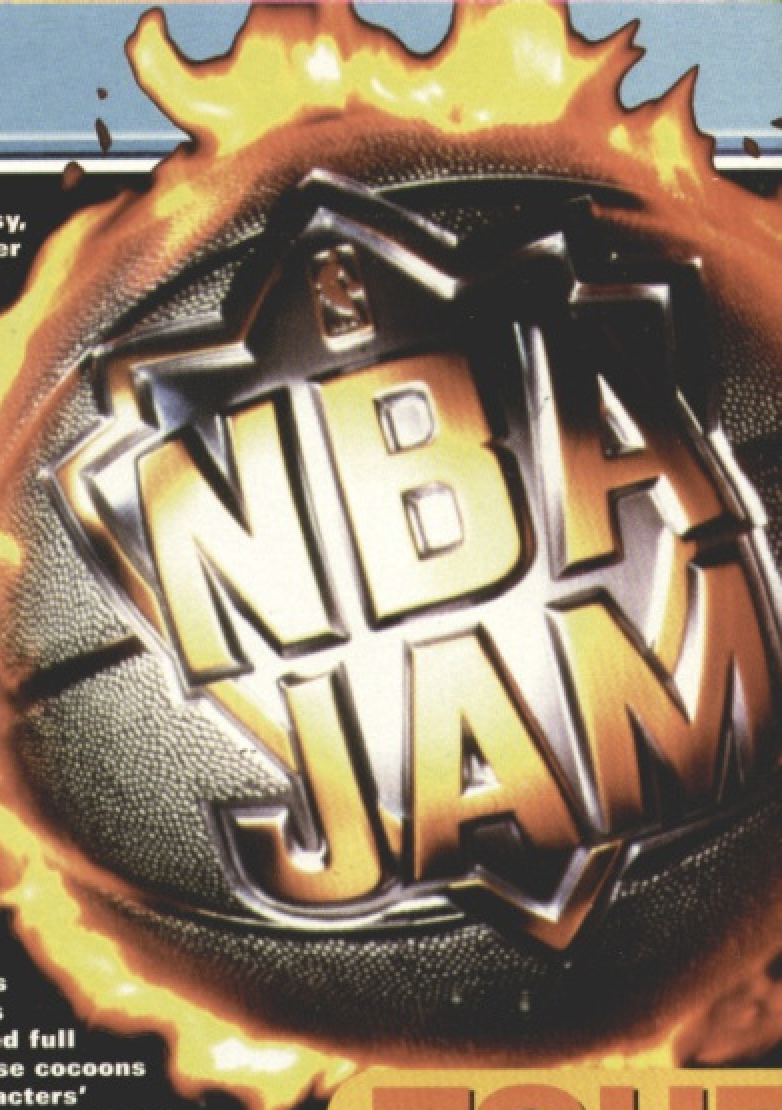
A conversion of the hugely-successful four-player Midway coin-op.

GAME AIM

To score baskets against the opposing team. What did you expect?

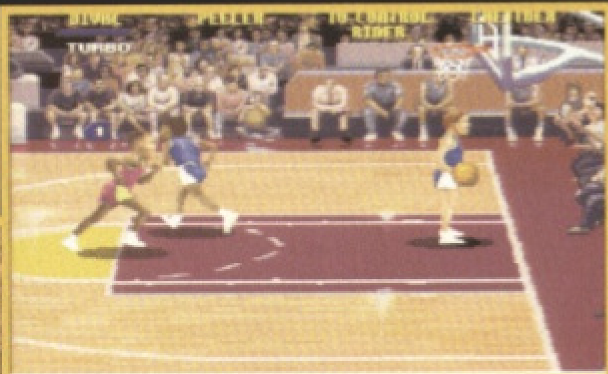
BEAT THIS

50-36



TOUR... E...

So, you think making games is easy, huh? Reckon you could do a better job than the professionals? But do you have any idea how games are really made? Well, prepare to find out now, as we take you on a tour of the subterranenan laboratories of Acclaim. For it's here that all their gaming experiments take place. Here, on the operating table we see the Judge Dredd sprite, his body grotesquely stitched together from the parts of old Alien 3 and Stargate characters. Obviously he's ready to be reused as spare-parts in another game. Grief, what's that smell? Ah, it's the offal carts, filled to the brim with old WWF and Rise of the Robot characters. These get turned into dog food. However, if you think that sight is grim, wait until you see the 32X lab. Here we see countless rows of 16-bit sprites strung from meat-hooks, awaiting 'treatment'. Previously, Mortal Kombat 2 and Quarterback Club characters could be found here. This tIme though, it's time for the NBA Jam sprites to be pumped full of 32X super serum. And look, here in these cocoons you can see the results. See how the characters' heads are growing bigger. Marvel at how their ravaged flesh takes on more colours. Amaze at the way their grainy digitised screams increase in quality. Yes, 32X NBA Jam is coming. Soon, my pretty... soon!





32X-LARGE

The more observant among you might notice that in some of our screenshots of 32X NBA Jam, the basketball players have somewhat larger heads than normal. Regardless of what we said earlier, this isn't because they've been injected with 32X super serum. It is in fact, the secret 'Tournament Edition coin-op cheat' in action. This cheat, suprisingly enough' allows you to give all the characters, wait for it... big heads. This doesn't affect the gameplay at all, but is quite funny, if you like laughing at big-headed people. This feature didn't make it into the Megadrive version of Tournament Edition, so it's a bit of a 32X bonus. Great.









COMMENT



STEVE

The original Megadrive version of NBA Jam was a excellent game, but in my mind the subsequent Tournament Edition — although obviously superior — didn't really add much to the original formula. It's much the same case when comparing 32X Tournament Edition with Megadrive Tournament Edtion, only more so. There are no new features to speak of (unless you consider big-heads to be something special) and the only improvements are in the presentation. Even here, the subtle improvements to the graphics and sound are negligible. Bigger sprites, smoother colouration and clearer sound it may have, but it doesn't add anything much to the game. Really, 32X Tournament Edition is only designed for 32X owners still harking after a good NBA Jam conversion. If that means you, then this is an excellent purchase. If you're a Megadrive NBA Jam owner though, you're not missing much

RNAMENT DITION



COMMENT



PAUL

There's no doubting this is the closest conversion of the coin-op to date, but not different enough from the 16bit version. The neat arcade idea of having a mode to expand the players' heads is there, but apart from that and better sound, there's little to discern between this and the Megadrive cart. This is a very half-hearted conversion which seems as if Iguana are going through the motions to get it onto the 32X. Whilst it is nice that Acclaim are supporting the ailing plug-thru, tired rehashes of Megadrive code are not the way to save it. With the scaling potential of the 32X, there was every possibility that the sprite expansion in the coin-op could be recreated to make an almost perfect conversion. However, as the players get nearer the edge of the court, they simply become blocky. Still, NBA Jam fans can revel in another very playable conversion of the coin-op, but for the definitive version wait for the Saturn game.

GRAPHICS — 83

▲ Good representations of the coin-op graphics.

▼ Nothing you wouldn't expect to see on a 16-bit machine though.

ANIMATION — 82

▲ The sprites move around very swiftly, capturing that NBA feel very well, with their nifty poses.

MUSIC — 79

▼ Improved versions of the Megadrive tunes as opposed to coin-op quality music. Mind you, the tunes aren't very good anyway.

EFFECTS — 84

▲ All those groovy Basketball phrases are pretty clear to the ear and the other sound-effects all work well.

PLAYABILITY — 86

▲ Playable as ever! Whether you're talking about the Megadrive or 32X versions, this is still the best basketball game around.

LASTABILITY — 81

▲ As long as you've got four players, this game will always provide entertainment.

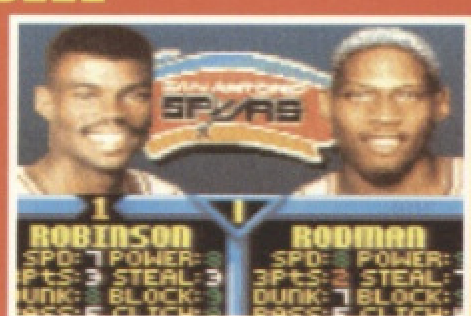
OVERALL

The best basketball game around, but then so is the Megadrive version.

81

EVEN MORE FLAVOUR!

Just like the Megadrive version of Tournament Edition, NBA Jam 32X contains all the extras from the updated Tournament Edition coin-op. The Juice Mode is now fitted as standard, giving you four different speed settings. There's also optional hotspots and power-ups which appear on court, allowing you to perform cross-court super-dunks and even cause courtquakes that topple all the other players. Of course, being a 32MEG 32X update, you expect a little more for your money, and you've got it. Only a little more, mind. A little more colour, a little better sound and a little bit of sprite-scaling when the players move towards the screen. It's all very subtle, but helps give the game a more arcadey feel.





BY: THQ

RELEASE	PRICE
JULY	TBA

GAME TYPE: EXPLORATION

1 PLAYERS — 16 MEG

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM

CONTINUES
PASSCODE

SKILL LEVELS
1

RESPONSIVENESS
MEDIUM

ORIGIN

Aquatic adventures based on the Speilberg-produced, effects-laden TV series of the same name.

GAME AIM

Captain the Seaquest around its patrol sectors and respond to the UEO missions flashed to you.

BEAT THIS

Third sector.

seaQuest DSV

The great unexplored is not 'out there'. Space is dead, man. It's 'down there': the sea, you see. Come the next millennium, people are paying more attention to the ocean. It's not just there as a place for Cornetto wrappers or to make some crappy provincial town into a 'resort'. The sea is a resource, it's a sanctuary, it's our future.

With this view in mind, the world governments create the huge submersibles that dwarf our notions of submarines. Heavily armed, but commissioned to keep the peace under the waves, you find yourself in command of the most imposing and majestic of them — the seaQuest.



CAPE COD CAPERS

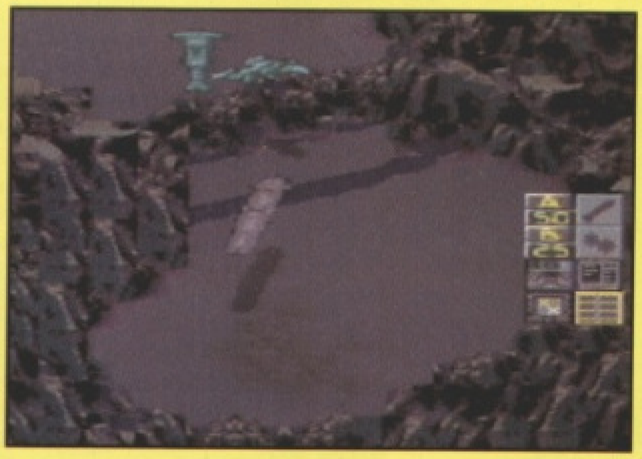
The game comes in two large tuna chunks. Chunk one is a psuedo-isometric exploration of the seabed in the seaQuest. Hostile forces attack from all sides, and must be destroyed before your shield percentage falls. On your sector map, the mission sites are marked. Travel to these and a message informs you that you are in range for...

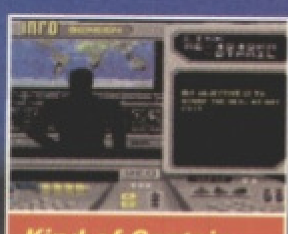
Chunk two which consists of several side-viewed missions, each with clear objectives. Complete all the missions in a sector for access to further rank, privilege and grief.











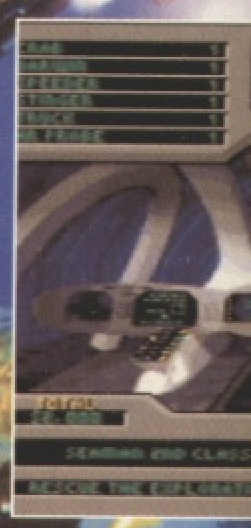
Kind of Captain Nemo retro.



Instrumentation. Snooze.



Holy underwater communities!







HOLD YOUR FIRE

Protection is as much of your remit as armed response, and it is vital that you do not harm the ocean's innocent life-forms. If you do, the penalty is severe — financial! You need money to buy fresh equipment damaged in your conflicts.





COMMENT



GUS

The TV show passed me by, and from the look of the game, it probably would too if I saw it in the shops. seaQuest's main problem is its cruddy appearance. Although close inspection of the sprites show they are all nicely rendered and animated, the backdrops and sparse levels look too dull and just to damn blue. That's the trouble with the sea. In fact, the game itself is a highly original mix of game styles, with missions constructed with a fair amount of thought, and at least trying to emulate elements of the series. It's reasonably absorbing and by no means a waste of time, but somewhat lacking in oomph or action.

COMMENT



STEVE

Sadly, I have seen the seaQuest TV series, and thought it was utter toss. It's typical US pap with a talking Dolphin, and an old sea dog. The game, though, is an Ecco-style shoot 'em up which requires a modicum of thought from the player as they use a wealth of ships to perform missions. This is a really nice idea that nicks the best bit of the show. The major problem, though, is that the game plods along with no real depth, leaving you wishing for a bit more fast-paced action. This and an element of repetition makes it too close to the show in all the wrong areas.

SUBS BENCH

The seaQuest is large enough to have six docking bays, and a mini armada of its own. This hi-tech exploration craft have differing abilities, and the key to the quest is to pick the right craft for the right mission:

CRAB



Has poor armament, but special inertial jets and an airlock. One of only two craft that can collect objects.

STINGER



One of two attack subs, the Stinger uses directional propulsion. It's fast and heavily armed.

SEA SPEEDER



The most powerful attack craft, but suffers from its large size and poor manoeuvrability. Has a useful homing depth charge.

SEA TRUCK



The seaQuest's recovery craft, this is painfully slow and difficult to defend, but has its specialised uses.

H-R PROBE



A remote control vehicle the H-R (hyper-reality) is specifically for welding tasks on sunken craft, and unadvisable to take into hot zones.

DARWIN



The charming cetacean recruit of seaQuest. Darwin is a trained dolphin who can reach areas to which the other craft cannot gain access. He's a fragile creature who should be protected.

GRAPHICS — 71

▲The sprites are nicely rendered, and the seaQuest styling is quite good.
▼Too dark and sombre..

ANIMATION — 67

▲The side-viewed missions feature good sprite animation.
▼The other areas of the game feature very little animation.

MUSIC — 54

▼Reedy, weedy, ineffectual theme music.

EFFECTS — 58

▼Barely noticeable in the course of the game. Certainly not atmospheric.

PLAYABILITY — 79

▲The mission briefings make the game variedl.
▼Often tricky, but not in an exhilarating or fast-paced way.

LASTABILITY — 76

▲Over a dozen missions, many requiring nous and skill.
▼ Simplistic and dull takes its toll on interest levels.

OVERALL — 77

SeaQuest DSV does a fair amount of justice to its license, but its depth doesn't quite make up for a lack of sparkle.

JU
ST



BY	THQ
RELEASE	JUNE
PRICE	£29.99
GAME TYPE	SHOOT EM UP
PLAYERS	1
MEG	4

BREAK DOWN

ORIGINALITY

CHALLENGE

ACTION

STRATEGY

REFLEXES

OPTIONS

CONTROL
JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD

CONTINUES
PASSCODE

SKILL LEVELS
1

RESPONSIVENESS
HARD

ORIGIN

An astonishingly faithful conversion of EA's classic helicopter thriller, from Unexpected Development.

GAME AIM

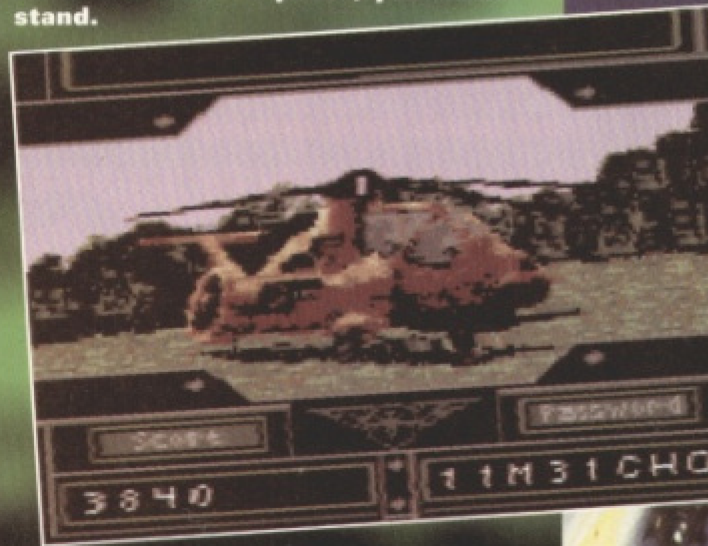
Complete each of the missions whilst destroying any forces you come up against.

BEAT THIS

25,000

MEGA GAME

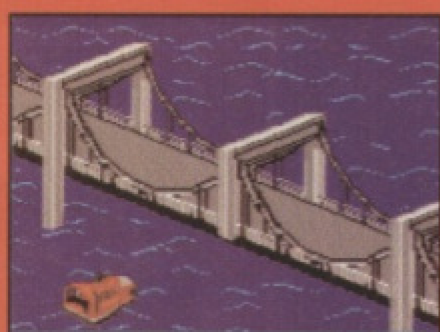
The war in the Gulf is over. The madman with the lip caterpillar and the towel on his head is a distant memory in the eyes of the media. We can all take the 'Our Boys' page from the Sun down from our front windows. But still hearts filled with hate and vengeance are plotting against the 'Great Satan', America.
They have spread their snares across all continents. They hide deadly isotopes in the Jungle and even dare infiltrate the Capitol in Washington in a bid to destabilise the Western alliance. Brave patriots, take up arms, climb into your apache chopper and take on terrorists wherever they may be. In the name of peace, you understand.

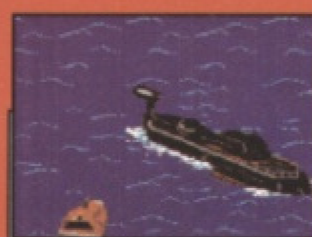




FURTHER DELIGHTS

There are a mammoth nine missions — all the turmoil of the 16MEG Megadrive version, which will take you to far-flung corners of the globe, and allow you to extend your pilots license to other vehicles, including hovercraft!

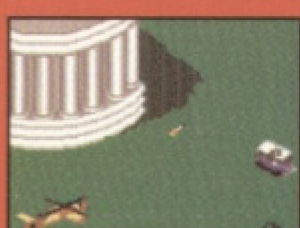




Oi! Can you 'sub' me a fiver? Titter.

A CHOPPER'S WORK

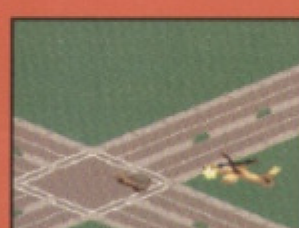
Each campaign is split into multiple missions, and you often have no idea what's coming next. Intelligence reports warn of developing situations, and the map reveals locations. Here's some of the first campaign events:



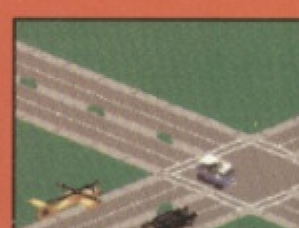
1. DEFEND THE MONUMENTS
Enemy forces attempt to capture key sites.



2. DESTROY ENEMY HIDEOUTS
You can free abducted agents by blowing them up.



3. NEUTRALISE BOMBS
A series of nail-biting chases of explosive-laden cars.



4. MOTORCADE
The President's personal safety is in your hands.

NGLE RIKE











GRAPHICS 92

▲The graphics work wonderfully. All kinds of architectural gubbins.
▼ Some map objects are just too small.

ANIMATION 90

▲The scrolling is fantastic, and even tiny sprite details, like gun turrets move.

MUSIC 31

▼No in-game music, which is of minor importance.

EFFECTS 72

▲Plenty chatter of gunfire.
▼The GG's sound chip doesn't exactly convey 'warzone'.

PLAYABILITY 94

▲Tip Top best describes the package. It has style, it has grace — it's sexy to play.

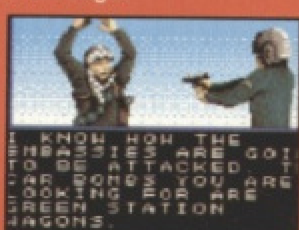
LASTABILITY 90

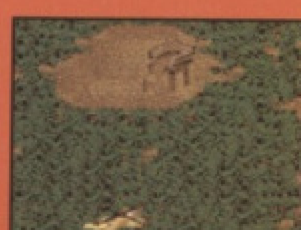
▲Nine campaigns will have you wibbling and battling for the next couple of months at least.

CO-OP SHOPPING

Your co-pilot is as important as yourself, so pick wisely from the choice of profiles. These guys aim your weapons and use the winch to collect people and supplies. Their skills vary in both these departments. If you can find the Missing In Action because, you acquire an edge.







COMMENT



GUS

This late arrival completely blew me away! This has to be one of the smartest conversions of any game ever. Not only has the look, feel and layout of a formidable EA classic been flawlessly recreated; the game has intensity, drama and challenge all of its own. The graphics are brilliant, with silky smooth scrolling and they have been configured to make the most of the Game Gear's small screen area. The game is huge, though we haven't seen if all the purported nine campaigns are there. We have no reason to doubt it. This is very probably the best Game Gear game of all time, in my opinion anyway.

COMMENT



STEVE

This arrived really late in our schedule — but it's quality meant it just had to be reviewed immediately. THQ'a conversion of Jungle Strike to the Game Gear is nowt short of amazing. The 16MEG Megadrive game has been crammed into the handheld with no major losses. The graphics are superb, the missions tough and varied — in fact, when you consider some of the shallow pap the Gear has seen, it's a major breakthrough. This is a brilliant game, and has blasted a path through the rest of the recent excellent Game Gear releases to sit right at the top. The best there is for the Game Gear, it's as simple as that...

OVERALL

Jungle Strike takes the blue riband: you can't ask for any more from a handheld game than it offers. Game Gear title of the year candidate.

93

FATAL FURY SPECIAL

Fighting game. Based on Neo-Geo coin-op. A mixture of the first two in the series. Starring the Bogard brothers and a dozen or more motley fighters. You can play as any of the characters. They have special moves. Like Street Fighter. And Mortal Kombat. The basic aim is to knock the stuffing out of your opponent. Repeat until they are all dead. Again. Played on two levels. The characters jump in and out of two-layer play area. There are nice backdrops. Including on a train and on a raft. The game loads between characters. Yik.

RELEASE: ....JULY	MEG:..............................CV
PLAYERS:...................1-2	PRICE:......................£44.95
BY: ....JVC	GAME TYPE:.BEAT 'EM UP

GRAPHICS 62
Large sprites, and gaudy but uninteresting backdrops.

EFFECTS 40
Grunts and smacking noises. Nothing new.

ANIMATION 43
Poor. The characters jerk about like an epileptics' convention.

PLAYABILITY 47
Too slow, and sluggish to control. Arse, in fact.

MUSIC 60
The CD is used well. Faithful to the coin-op.

LASTABILITY 24
Lots of characters, but too slow to maintain interest.

OVERALL 36
Looks like the first Street Fighter. If only it had come out eight years ago. Dire. Crap. Awful.

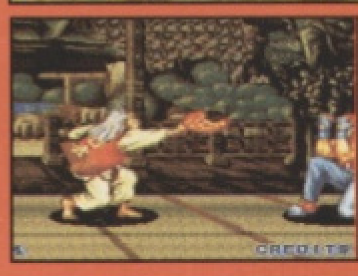






NOW IN 3D

In addition to the basic one-on-one action, Fatal also features a two-tier play area which the players leap in and out of in the heat of battle. A rather neat touch, though, is that sneaky punches can be traded as the pair cross paths between planes. And... er, that's it.



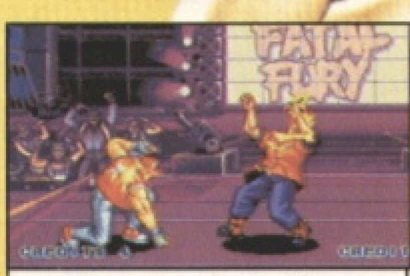
"Nope, it's no good, Terry, it looks like we're stuck in this piece of crap...'

COMMENT



So this is how far we've come since the first Street Fighter came out eight years ago is it? A crap, badly-animated duel with animation so stilted I swore Gerry Anderson was above pulling the strings. Slow. Unresponsive. Dated. Gaudy. Crap backdrops. Poor sound. Complete arse. And it loads between every character, just to add an extra layer to this, the ultimate Mega-CD embarrassment. The worst Mega-CD title in bloody ages. You'd think MKII never happened.

STEVE



Readers fainting at Sega Power's paltry 84 pages. Hey, what's that number beneath this Caption? Twelve pages to go yet!



COMMENT



I disagree with Steve on two counts: I don't think the graphics are that bad, and I don't think it's the ultimate Mega-CD embarrassment, as long as the memory of Brutal by Gametek endures. Otherwise, he's sadly spot-on. The animation is dire; the gameplay no more progressed than early Street Fighter; there's no pace, and the between-level loading is just a liberty. More than enough reasons for a wide berth I think.

GUS

MEAN YOB

Ah, hello again youngsters, it's Yob here again. You know, I've been writing this column for about as long as I can remember, and I've seen some things, I can tell you. Nations have fallen, new ones have been born. Danny Baker's career has exploded and then flopped. But some things don't change. People are still writing "what's best: Megadrive or SNES?" or "ha, Mario is a fat poo" letters. And now there' all this Saturn/PlayStation tosh as well. And Jaguar. And 3DO. Why don't you just stop it? Why don't you all just go away? There's only so much a man can take before he decides to visit the home of each and every Mean Machines reader and stick ground glass under their eyelids – and I've taken just about enough. So do yourselves a favour, write something at least partially interesting to me at YOB'S ARSEQUAKE MAILBAG, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. If next month's section isn't full of vibrant, witty letters I'll be paying you visit. So thinking about it you'd better start running now.

RIDICULE IS NOTHING TO BE SCARED OF

Dear Yob

I am absolutely sick and tired of people complaining about the Saturn! The machine isn't even out in England and people are complaining. There are some cool games for the machine and more being planned. If games such as Virtua Fighter, Daytona USA, and Panzer Dragoon are being released for it the Saturn can't be bad! In my opinion the Saturn can hold its own against the likes of the Playstation and Jaguar. The Saturn could turn out to be really cool, so give the machine a chance.

Lee Mountford, Ferryhill, County Durham

YOB:**Absolutely, and as for the Saturn giving the Jaguar a run for its money, I'd been keener to add that even the Megadrive can keep up. Have you seen Kasumi Ninja? What a pile of donkey's arse! One of the special moves is a scotsman lifting his kilt!**



Shaz paints the portrait of a lawgiver driven to the edge by acne.

DON'T DRINK, DON'T SMOKE

Dear Yob

I'm writing to you to voice a particularly strong opinion of mine. I'm sure you'll prefer it to some of the crap you get sent: 'Yob, you smell like a baboon's bottom, tee hee!'. Anyway, I just want to express my gratitude to Sega for finally realising the potential for RPGs on the Megadrive in this country. For many years Japan has had the benefit of hundreds of great RPGs on most console formats. In England, as I'm sure you'll agree, there have been few RPGs released until now, except a few pap ones that somehow infiltrated British stores. Super NES owners have had some great RPGs and adventure games — the Final Fantasy series, Zelda, and the new Chrono Trigger. So I thought it was about time the Megadrive turned out some stunners. Now what has happened? First Shining Force, then Landstalker, Shining Force II, Soleil, and Story of Thor. All outstanding games, and all released in a relatively short period of time. Megadrives have finally been blessed with a truly great range of RPGs. Thank you Sega. Enough bootlicking. Now I know this isn't Q&A, but I'd like to know if any other RPGs are planned for release on the Megadrive.

J Thompson, Derby

YOB:**As you said, no it isn;t Q&A. Yes, plenty of RPGs are planned. I hope you sleep better at night. Really I do.**

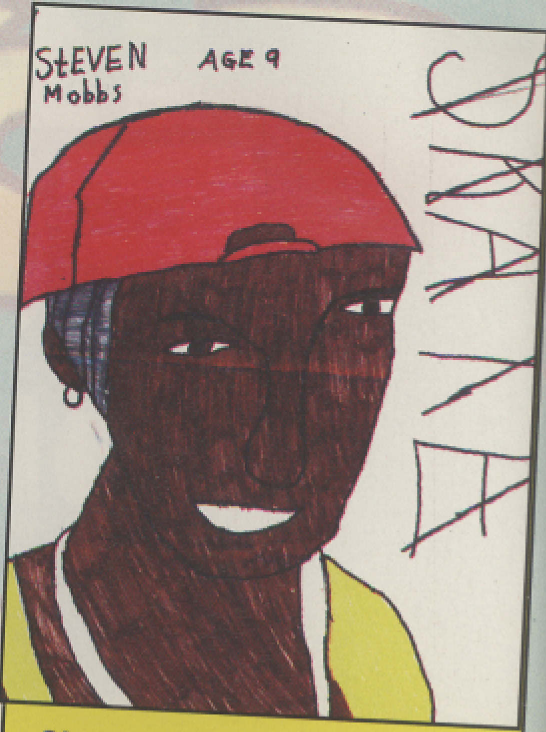
YOUNG PARISIENS ARE SO FRENCH

Dear Yob

If you insult any more of the good people on the Earth then I'm afraid you're going to wake up with a very large crowd around you. I'm going to rip your head off and gob a big phlegmmy down your throat. Next I'll shove your big, over-sized head up your backside, so far it will look like you're pregnant. Then I'll rip out your spine and use it to cut your still beating heart out. Finally I'll take a few photos of your remains, photocopy them and send them to every member of your family, who will undoubtedly laugh their ugly heads off!

Tim Keeley, West Bridgford, Nottingham

YOB:**Hmmm, 'rip off my neck and spit down my throat.' Not very original are you. I imagine you probably regale your mates (or mate, more likely) by quoting hilarious lines from your favourite sitcoms. Bloody hell, I just bet the streets of Nottingham rock to the sounds of old Barry Cryer and Les Dennis. The word 'tosser' sums you up admirably.**



Skate, now deformed for life after a nasty roller-blading accident.

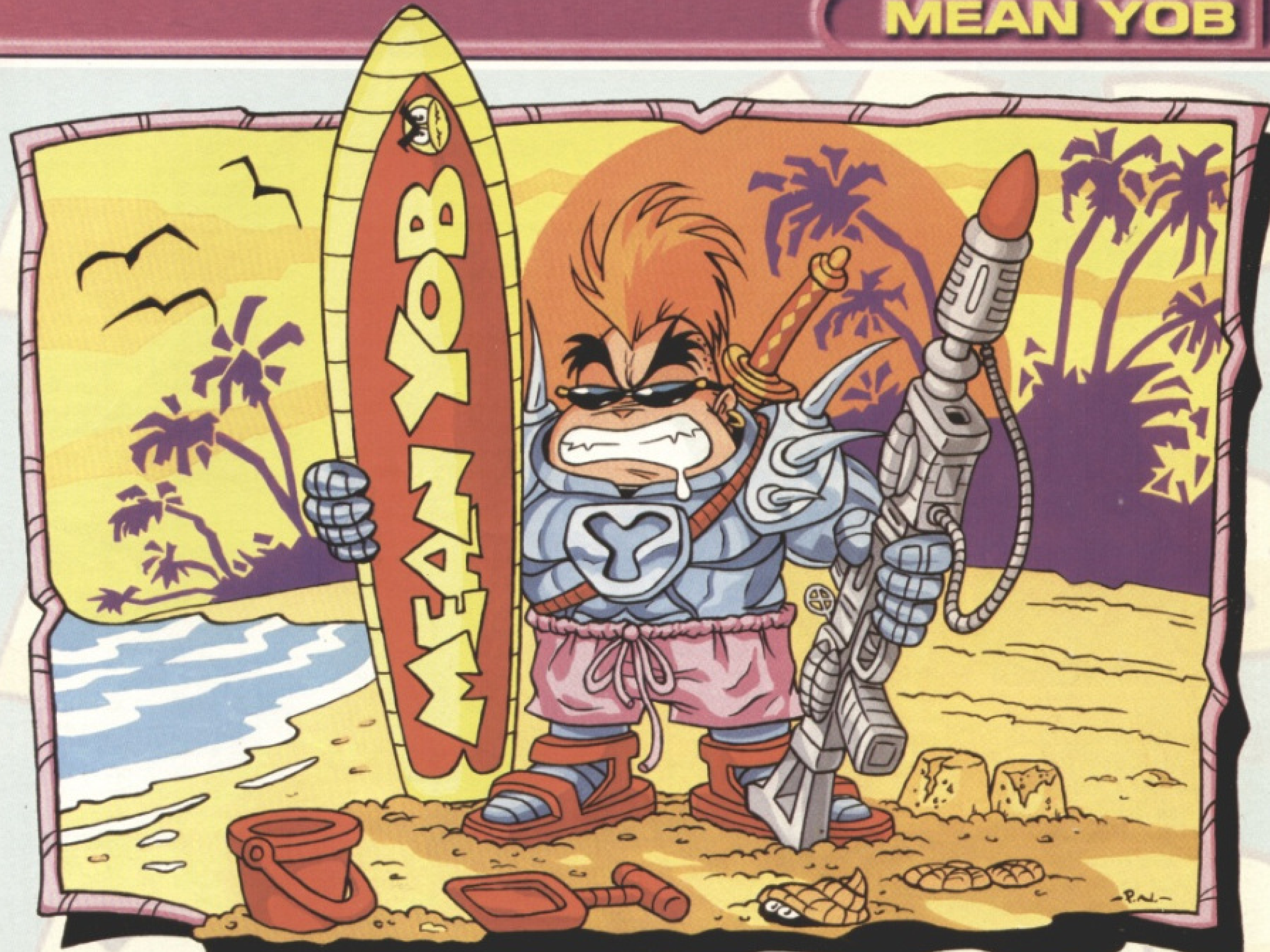
UNPLUG THE JUKEBOX AND DO YOURSELF A FAVOUR

Dear Yob

After reading your mag for about two years now, I felt I had to write in to tell you that I now think that people who play games are sad gits. All you have to do is read some of the letters to realise just how retarded gamesplayers are. I used to play games and thought that they were the be-all and end-all, spending hours playing down the arcade and in front of my home consoles, but now I'd much rather go to the pictures with my girlfriend. Why don't you guys just wake up and grow up! Just think about all the money you could save instead of wasting it on foolish carts.

Paul Keats, Harpenden

YOB:**My, what a revolutionary concept. However, what's wrong with doing both? Nobody said you have to spend all your time playing games — that was your choice. Personally, I reckon that you just sent this in to prove you have a girlfriend (although no real proof is forthcoming). Who are you trying**



to impress. Besides, when she sees sense and chucks you, I bet you'll find solace in your copies of Desert Strike and other games you've 'grown out of.' Patronising pillocks like you are always keen to pigeon-hole others in order to make yourselves look better. Just get on with your life if you're so pleased with it. Besides if you're too cool to waste time on games and stuff, how come you've got time to write to us. Washing her hair is she? Yeah, right...**



On the back of this were some geography notes....but no name. Doh!

MARKO, MERRICK, TERRY-LEE, GARY TIBBS AND YOURS TRU-LEE

Dear Yob
I'm offended! As one of the few girls who buy your magazine, I couldn't believe it when I saw that disgusting picture of Mileena in your pages. Do boys really think that all girls look like this? I feel sorry for all those spotty adolescents who have nothing better to do than dream about female characters in games.
Tricia Montesque, Leeds
YOB:**Er... sorry about that, the black strip didn't quite come out properly. And, sadly, all boys do think girls look like that. I know I used to...**

THE DEVIL TAKE YOUR STEREO

AND RECORD COLLECTION

Dear Yob
I read your comic all the time and love it! It's the best. Please can you answer my questions?
1. How much is Mortal Kombat 3?
2. Will it be on the Megadrive?
3. Is it worth getting?
4. When is Alien vs Predator coming out?
5. Is that for the Megadrive?
6. How much will it be?
7. Is a PC better than a Megadrive?
8. Could you say hello to my girlfriend Lisa?
John Harper, Essex
YOB:**COMIC! COMIC! Cheeky sod, what do you think this is, the bloody Beano! You can stuff your questions where the sun don't shine, or post them to Dennis the piggin' Menace...**

KWA-KWA A DIDDLEE KWA-KWA A DIDLEE...

Dear Yob
I would like to make this letter short, so I'll get straight to the point. In the Q&A section of Issue 30 (June), John Blewett asked...
4. I want to design game for my PC. Is this possible?
5. If so, what equipment do I need
...Well I agree with Steve on his answer, but he blew it on question five because my answer would be all you need is Klik 'n' Play, which lets you make fast running games in Windows without having to use programming. But it helps if you have a scanner, a Pentium, a sound card, speakers, and a microphone, so you can put your own sounds and pictures in your games. There, that's shut you up. Now you have to apologise for telling John Blewett a complete and utter lie.
Philip Reuben, Romford, Essex
YOB:**Nobody likes a smart arse. Shouldn't you be out telling people 'you don't wanna do that?'**

I think I'll go and wash my mouth out with Neutralia Dermo-protection now. I deserve a medal for resisting any Super man jokes. Now as Cilla says, 'Tara for now'.

Q&A

I'll tell you what, Sweden's got a lot to answer for. I mean, just what has Sweden done in the grand scheme of things. We introduced the world to Cricket and Footy, America gave us hot-dogs, and the French introduced us to hairy armpits. But Sweden? Naff all. I mean, they've made token efforts to impress with the likes of Abba, Roxette and pervy films with extreme close-ups, but nothing that really makes you think 'yeah, that's Swedish and good.' I recommend that until the Swedes come up with something interesting, the place should be walled up until they invent something good. Honestly, after records like Waterloo and Joy-Ride, it's the least they can do...

Send your Q&A ramblings to:
HURDY DUR-SKURDY HUR Q&A,
MEAN MACHINES SEGA,
PRIORY COURT,
30-32 FARRINGDON LANE,
LONDON,
EC1R 3AU

TECHNICIAN TED

Dear Steve
Can you please answer my questions?
1. Can you list these games from best to worst: Street Racer, NBA Jam: TE, Theme Park, Fever Pitch.
2. Can you play a Mega-CD on a Megadrive 2?
3. Which one is better, Road Rash 2 or 3?
4. In MEAN MACHINES No. 32. someone wrote a letter asking what the words at the bottom of the screen were for. They are cheats. If you go to the options screen and type them in you will get to extra leagues on the tournament mode.
5. Which is the best football game out on the Megadrive?
Zayd Mamewoolah, Walthamstow
STEVE: 1. Theme Park, Fever Pitch, NBA, Street Racer. 2. Yep. It looks rubbish, though: like Jimmy Krankie sitting on the Jolly Green Giant's knee. 3. Two, and it's cheaper. 4. What words? 5. Fever Pitch.

MINER WILLY

Dear Steve
Oh master of all, please answer my pitiful questions, Demi-God of gaming.
1. I have a Megadrive 2 and Mega-CD 2. What games should I get?
2. I'm going to get a 32X for my birthday in July, and a Saturn the year after. Is that a good idea?
3. Are any of these games going to appear on Mega-CD: Fatal Fury, Samurai Shodown, Theme Park, any X-Men game, Primal Rage?
Phil Doyle, Gloucester
STEVE: 1. Mortal Kombat II, Earthworm Jim CD, Eternal Champions CD. 2. About as good as burning £150 when you need to save another £400. Forget the 32X, it's deader than tanktops. 3. Yep, yep, yep, nope, nope.



WALLY WEEK

Dear Steve
Please can you answer my questions?
1. On Theme Park on the Megadrive can you go on the rides like the PC?
2. Will MK3, Ridge Racer, Doom and Dark Forces come out on the Saturn?
3. Will there be a Virtua Fighter 3?
Billy No-Mates, Homeless
1. No. And you can't 'be' the boss either. 2. MK3 and Doom will, the others aren't planned as of yet. 3. You bet your eyes there will.



ZIGGY

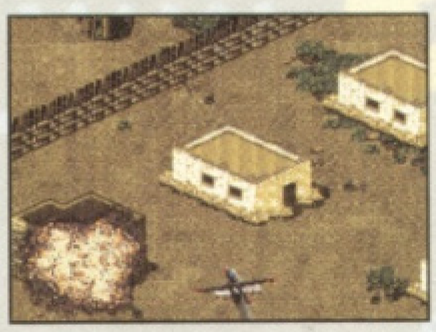
Dear Steve
1. Do you know any cheats for Haunting?
2. Is there any news on SF III?
3. Is the new Spiderman game any good?
4. What do you think of Batman Forever?
5. What should I buy, Virtua Racing or Street Racer?
6. In Landstalker I have the sunstone from Greenmaze and I don't know what to do with it. The lighthouse has turned into the crypt. Could you tell me please?
Akeel Ahmed, Woodford
STEVE: 1. No. 2. No, Capcom are too busy tossing about with the awful Street Fighter: Movie game. Which I hate. 3. If you mean the new Acclaim one, I reckon it's too similar to Wolverine. 4. I've only seen a very rough version, but it looks quite polished. 5. VR. 6. Walk left to Porkoss the beaver and ask him for the 'Kettle of Threngoll.' Actually, that's a lie. I ain't got a clue.

TRASHMAN

Dear Steve
Please can you answer my questions.
1. What games are coming out for the Master System?
2. Will Mortal Kombat 3 be out on the Master System?
3. is the Saturn better than the Playstation?
4. Is the New Breed still coming out on the Megadrive?
5. Will Virtua Fighter 2 be arcade perfect on the Saturn?
Stephen Wiseman, Linton
STEVE: 1. None. As far as everyone in the world is concerned it's dead and buried. Do yourself a favour, hide it and we'll pretend this letter never happened. 2. Hahahahahahaha! 3. Nope. They're both as good as each other. 4. No, it died when Accolade passed away. 5. Probably not if I'm honest. But I hope it is.

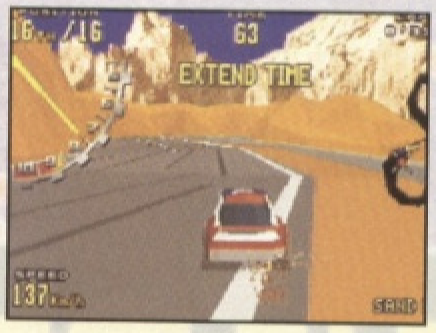
BOBBY BEARING

Dear Steve
Your mag is just brilliant and no mag can possibly beat it. Could you possibly answer my questions?
1. What is the best, Neptune or Saturn? Why?
2. How much will they cost?
3. Could you put these games in order from best to worst: Urban Strike; Probotector; Cannon Fodder; SSF II, MK II?
4. Are there any more Sonic games coming out for the Megadrive?
5. Is there going to be a sequel to the crap Turtles Tournament Fighters?
Joe Jones, Canterbury
STEVE: 1. Saturn. Because it is truly 32bit, and not a Megadrive with a duffy 32X stuck into its guts. 2. The prices haven't been confirmed, but the Neptune will be around the £200 mark, and the Saturn £400. 3. MKII, Cannon, Probotector, Urban, SSFII. 4. I expect Sonic 4's on the cards, but we haven't seen owt of it yet. 5. No. The Turtles are so old now they'd have to call it Middle-Aged Whinger Turtles.

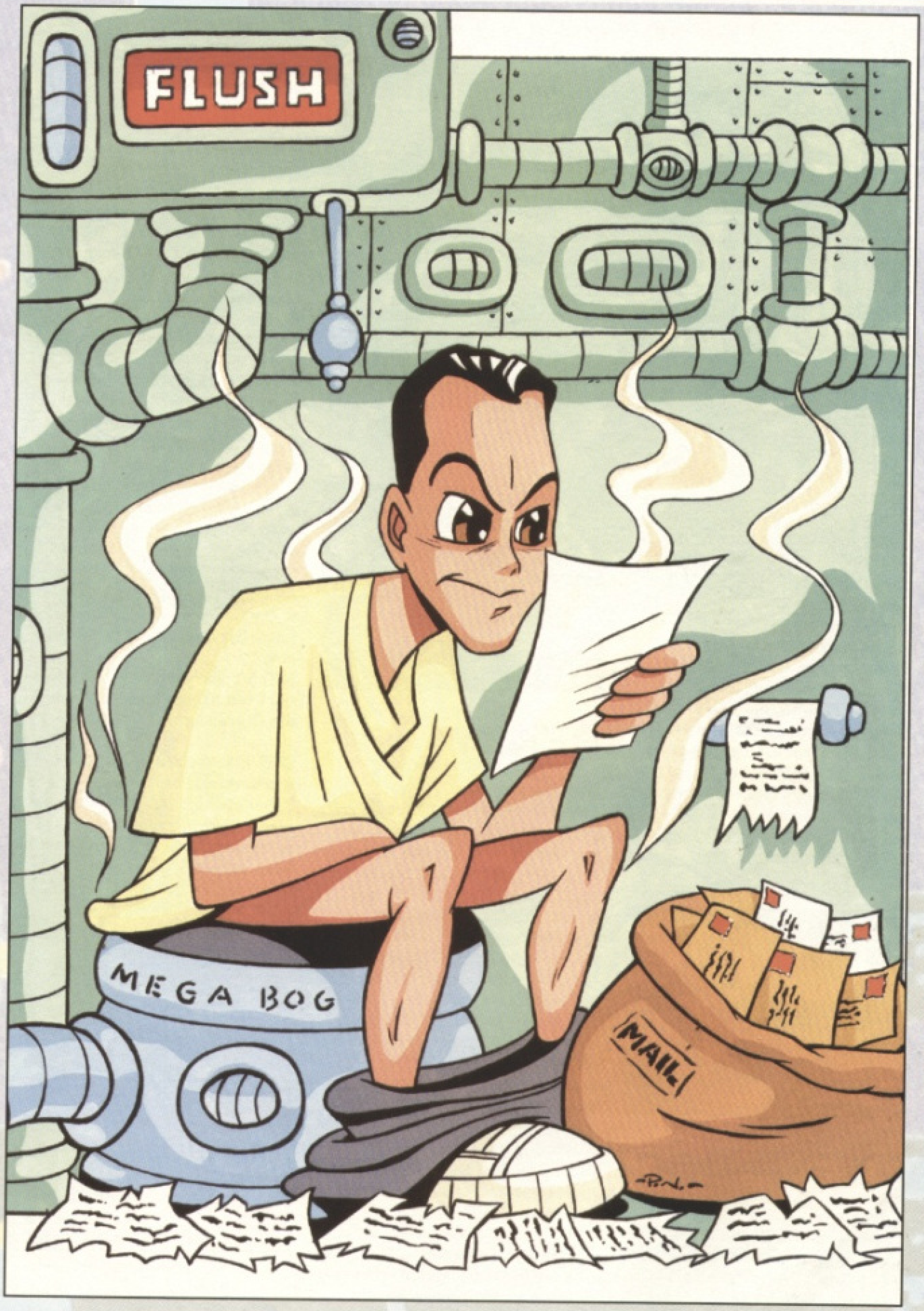


SABRE MAN

Dear Steve
I am very confused so please could you help me. I want to either buy a Sega Saturn or a Playstation and I'm not sure which one, so could you please answer my questions because you know everything and you're so skilled. I'm not worthy, I'm not...
1. How much will they both cost, Steve, sir?
2. How much will the CDs cost for each system?
3. I've looked in all the major games retailers but I just can't find the Saturn or Playstation anywhere. Where can I find them?
4. Which system has the most capabilities?
5. Which system has the most games on the cards?
6. Do Sega have any games planned for the Playstation, or the other way around?
7. Which one would you recommend?
Carl Griffiths, South Wales
STEVE: 1. Prices haven't been set yet, but expect to pay between £350-£400 for each. 2. Around the £30-40 mark. Again, it hasn't been confirmed. 3. Virgin have imports of both, as do most small shops,



but wait for the official machines because none of the UK games will work on a foreign system. 4. The PlayStation is slightly better graphically. 5. About the same. 6. Nope. 7. Wait to see how they're priced.

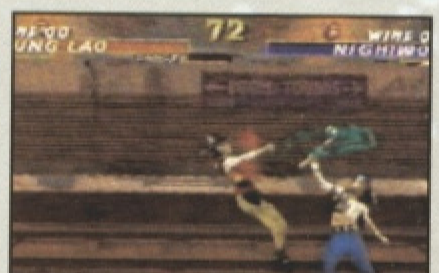


JET MAN

Dear Steve
Yo cretins, how's it going? Your mag's great, fantastic, I've read it from the first issue, etc. All the usual rubbish. If you've got time, make my pathetic little day and answer my questions.
1. Soon I'm going to the States, and I thought I'd invest in some cheapo games. Just one small problem occurs: Do American Genesis games work on an English Megadrive? And if not, why not?
2. Have Sega stopped producing a certain two joypads. I refer to the procurable [sic] one and the infra-red one.
3. Lastly, got any cheats for Bart vs the Space Mutants (it doesn't matter if you haven't heard of it — no one has). Or any for Chuck Rock II, Streets of Rage II or Revenge of Shinobi.
Daniel Moore
STEVE: 1. They should do. I've got a US MKII and it works fine on my UK Megadrive. 2. Yep. 3. Yes we have. Loads, in fact. None of which we're going to tell you, though.

MONTY MOLE

Dear Steve
Last month I got a paper round and I am saving up for a 32X. I have some questions about the Megadrive and 32X, please could you answer them.
1. Is it worth getting the 32X in



postage from 'Excitement Direct' which cost £133.75?

2. Is Dark Forces coming out on the 32X?
3. Is there a level select and debug for Knuckles in Sonic 2 and Sonic 3? If there is tell me.
4. Will MK3 come out for the 32X?
5. Are there any SFII games coming out for the 32X?
6. Is Road Rash coming out for the 32X like the CD version?
7. Why is Alien Trilogy not coming out for the 32X?
8. When are Virtua Fighter, Primal Rage and Daytona USA coming out on 32X?
9. How come Corpse Killer, Night Trap and Supreme Warrior and Slam City are on CD only and not cart?
Ryan Button, Leicester
STEVE:1. DO NOT BUY A 32X! YOU WILL REGRET IT. SAVE A WHILE LONGER AND GET A SATURN — IT'LL LAST YOU LONGER THAN A RANCID BLACK MUSHROOM WITH STUFF-ALL GAMES. 2. Nope. 3. Nope, shan't. Can't make me. 4. Probably not. It's coming for the Saturn, though. 5. Nope, but SF: The Movie is Saturn-bound. 6. Nope, but the Saturn version looks nice. 7. Because the machine can't handle the graphics processing needed. The Saturn can. Getting a hint at what I'm saying yet? 8. Primal is due in November, the others aren't going to be converted to the 32X. 9. Because of the oodles of graphical data they store.

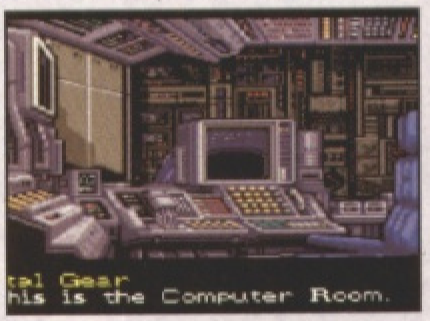


BUG-A-BOO

Dear Steve
I have bought a Mega-CD and I desperately want the Secret of Monkey Island (the game). Please could you answer my questions.
1. Will Monkey Island ever be released in the UK?
2. If so, when?
3. If not, why not, and where the bloody hell can I get an imported version.
Thanks very much.
Mark, Coombes, W Sussex
STEVE:1. Probably not now, I'm afraid. 2. Like, never. 3. Because the Mega-CD sells bugger all games. Buy one from any importer who can get you a copy. Obvious,

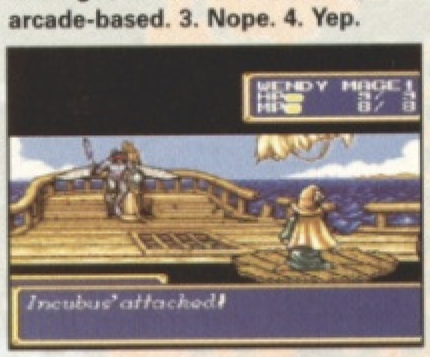
SAMANTHA FOX

Dear Steve
Please answer my Qs.
1. Is Snatcher 2 coming out?
2. How much will it cost?
3. Is TJ and Earl coming out?
4. What do you think of Star Wars Rebel Assault?
Matthew F
STEVE:1. Yes, but not for ages. It's called Policenauts. 2. About £40. 3. It's been out for ages. I've got a question: what are you on about? 4. Looks great, all the playability of a room full of carrots.



BEAKY

Dear Steve
At the moment I want to buy an RPG for the Megadrive. Alas, I am in a dilemma though, as I do not know which one to buy. If you could answer these questions it would really help me choose the right one.
1. Could you please list these in order of best to worst. Shining in the Darkness, Shining Force 1 & 2, Landstalker and Story of Thor.
2. Is there a difference between adventure and RPG games, because you classed Shining Force as an RPG, but Story of Thor as adventure.
3. Will any RPGs that play like Arcana on the SNES be released?
4. Wasn't there tons of unheeded hype over SSFII?
Andrew Royston, Wirral
STEVE:1. 1. Landstalker, Thor, any Shining Force game, the other one. 2. There's more role-playing in Shining and the fighting is more strategic, whereas Thor is very arcade-based. 3. Nope. 4. Yep.



CODENAME MATT

Dear Steve
Will you please answer my questions or I'll...I'll, never mind. By the way, your mag is tops and still cheapest!
1. When are Sega going to stop making Master System games?
2. Is the Incredible Hulk on the Megadrive worth £9?
3. Why are SNES games £5 to £10 more expensive than Sega counterparts?
4. What is best overall, Saturn or Sony Playstation?
5. Why is Theme Park on the Megadrive not quite so good as the Amiga version?
6. I've heard the Ultra 64 is superb. Is this true, who makes it and how much will it cost?
7. Are EA going to bring out a FIFA '96 and NHL '96 and a decent original game like Road Rash III?
8. On the Playstation, why is Ridge Racer the only decent game available?
9. The Saturn and Playstation have not been released, but in Virgin they have them?
Christopher Millar, Caerphilly
STEVE:1. Yesterday. 2. It isn't worth the plastic it's made out of. 3. Because of where the carts are made. 4. Both about the same. 5. It is. Shut up. 6. The Ultra 64 hasn't been seen in any way, shape or form. A price has yet to be decided. 7. Yep. Do I sense a touch of the old sarcasm there? 8. What about Tekken? 9. Yes, and?



AGENT 4125

Dear Steve
This is the first time I've written to you, so I would be pleased if you print it in your mag. Please answer the following questions.
1. How much do you think I should sell my Master System with all the games, and my Megadrive with all the games for? (Lion King on Megadrive, Jungle Book, Sonic 3, Sonic 1, Sonic 2, Alex Kidd and Agassi Tennis on the Master System).
2. Which is best to buy: a 32X or a Neptune?
3. Is Theme Park ever to be released on the 32X?
4. Can you give me a cheat for the Lion King on the Megadrive?
5. If I buy a 32X, which games should I buy with the vouchers?
Jonathan Westhorp, Heywood, Lancs
STEVE:1. I'd give you a fiver. Dunno, really, check MegaMart to see what the going price is. 2. Neither. Buy a Saturn. 3. Nope. 4. No. 5. MKII. Er, that's about it. Doom, I suppose.

COOKIE

Dear Steve
Will you please find answers for the following questions:
1. When will Scooby Doo be released for the Megadrive and roughly how much will it cost?
2. Any news on Sensible World of Soccer for the Megadrive?
3. Are there any plans for a football management game on either Megadrive or Game Gear?
4. Could you rate these game from best to worst: Micro Machines 2, Madden's '95, NHL '95, Cannon Fodder, PGA Golf 3.
Bryan Jeffrey, Renfrew
STEVE:1. Nobody is currently set to bring Scooby out, so we'll have to wait and see. 2. Nope. 3. Nope. 4. Micro II, Cannon Fodder, PGA, NHL, Madden. By the way, you live in Gus's home town, you know. He says can you knock on his door and tell his Mum he'lL be late for his tea.

Reet, that's y'lot. If you have any more questions you know where to send them. I'll be waiting. Oh aye, I'll be waiting...

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MR NUTZ in sex scandal with Dominik Diamond! He's not actually but I would like to swap Megadrive games with you! Any games considered. All my games are in good condition. Please phone Nikolai at any time on 0436 676788.

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